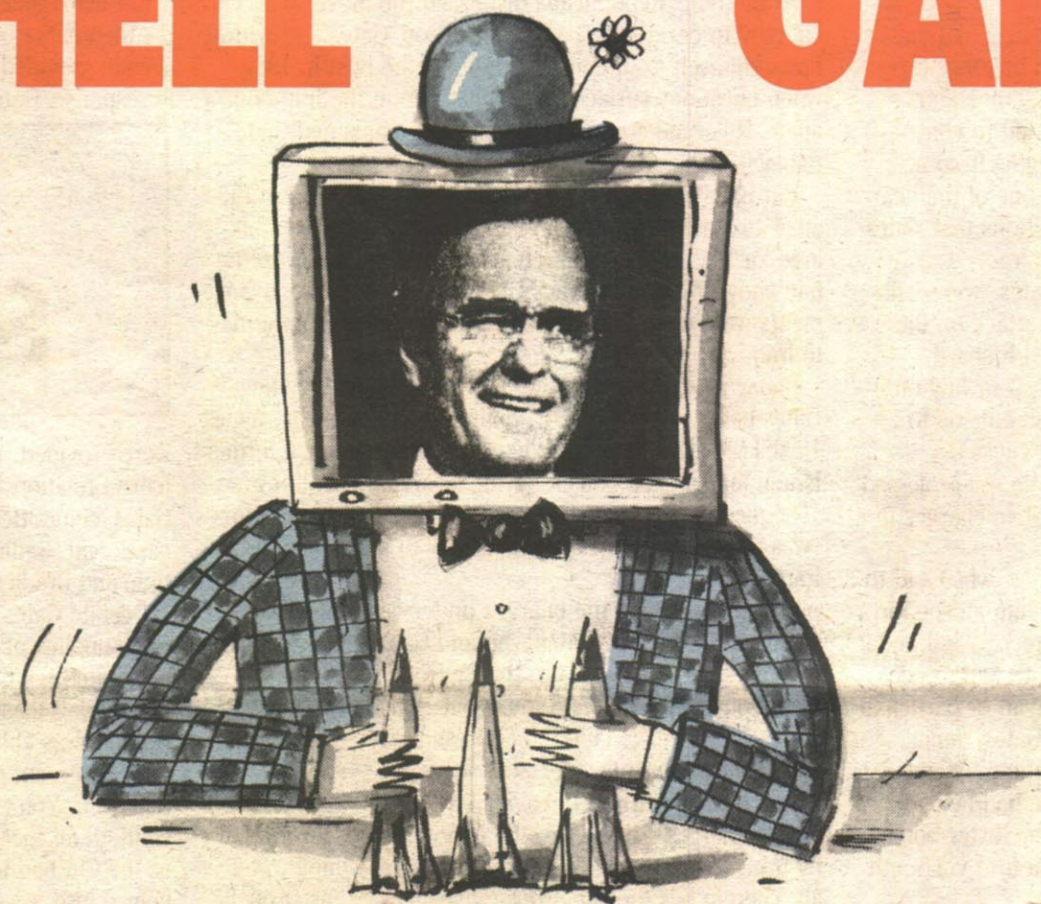


BUSH'S NUCLEAR SHELL GAME



EDITORIAL

Two weeks ago, in a move unprecedented in the nuclear age, President Bush announced deep cuts in the American nuclear arsenal and asked the Soviets to negotiate further reductions. Bush's bold move finally gives official recognition to the absence of a Soviet military threat. For now tactical nuclear weapons will be pulled out of Europe and the mobile MX missile program will be cancelled, as will the current program to build a short-range attack missile for strategic bombers. If the Soviet Union agrees to eliminate all short-range nuclear weapons, as Bush proposed and as Mikhail Gorbachov has indicated a willingness to do, the president's initiative will lead to the destruction of 19,000 warheads—and to further reductions in nuclear weapons in the future.

While this initiative is welcome, much of it was just window dressing. The tactical weapons withdrawn from Europe, for example,

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Arms and the man who would be CIA director

As *In These Times* went to press, the Senate Intelligence Committee had just begun grilling Robert Gates, President Bush's nominee to head the CIA, about charges that he falsified agency intelligence reports. Unfortunately, the committee seemed to have lost interest in probing Gates' alleged involvement in a U.S.-backed scheme to illegally ship arms to Iraq. In September 1990—eight months before Gates had even been nominated—Don Ward, a reporter for Florida's Boca Raton News, began investigating the CIA's involvement in that affair. Ward, whose south Florida beat has proved fertile ground for investigating the arms dealers and intelligence operatives involved in the affair, was one of the first reporters to uncover allegations of the Iraqi shipments.

The following article is based on Ward's stories for the Boca Raton News.

By Don Ward

Boca Raton, FL

On the first day of Senate confirmation hearings for CIA Director-designate Robert Gates, Sen. Frank Murkowski (R-AK) lobbed a bombshell expected to come from different quarters. Murkowski, diverging from a series of somnolent questions, broached one of the hearings' most explosive subjects—the allegations that Gates participated in a covert operation to arm Iraq.

Insisting that the allegations against Gates "were without merit," Murkowski leveled a stinging attack on the nominee's accusers. Murkowski lambasted Richard Babayan, a key source for stories broadcast in July on ABC and PBS implicating Gates in arms shipments to Iraq. The senator dismissed Babayan—"I guess it's Babayan," Murkowski coyly remarked—as "a self-professed arms dealer, now awaiting trial for securities charges in a Florida jail."

Murkowski expressed sympathy for Gates, who "had to silently endure" the charges, and offered him an "opportunity to respond to them publicly on the record and under oath." During a light-hearted exchange with Murkowski, Gates flatly denied having ever met Babayan or participating in any covert operation to arm Iraq. Gates' denial, much of it made through smiles and laughter, extended to reports by ABC News' *Nightline* that he had helped provide Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein with cluster-bomb technology and arms from a Pennsylvania firm via South Africa.

At the end of Murkowski's questioning, Gates told the senator, "I'd just like to thank you for making that public ... I'm just grateful to have it straightened out and cleared up."

But Richard Babayan, the 36-year-old Iranian national who claims to have transported arms to Iraq under Gates'

direction, says Gates' testimony cleared up nothing. Speaking from his cell in the Palm Beach County jail, Babayan says, "It's obvious [the Murkowski questioning] was staged. They just don't want the truth to come out because they know it will be embarrassing."

True or False?: Of course, in the case of the Iraqi missile shipment, it's hard to know who's telling the truth. Allegations against Gates rely largely on information from arms dealers, intelligence operatives and other shady figures who make their living by bending and breaking the law.

Babayan, currently under indictment for defrauding investors in his communication company of \$1.5 million, emerged as a key source in a series of July reports on ABC News' *Nightline* and PBS's *Frontline* about the CIA and Gates' involvement in the Iraqi arms scandal. Soon after the shows aired, Babayan was whisked from his Palm Beach jail cell and brought to Washington to testify in a closed House subcommittee hearing about his activities in the shipment of arms to Iraq.

At the time, Republicans dismissed the move as a cynical ploy to derail the Gates nomination. Gates had withdrawn himself from consideration for the post in 1987 when questions surfaced about his role in the Iran-contra affair. This time around, Republicans complained that Babayan's charges were well-timed fiction.

But Babayan had first publicly implicated Gates in the affair two months before President Bush nominated his aide for the post. In a March affidavit, Babayan swore he had knowledge of meetings Gates attended where arrangements were made to transfer information and ship arms to Iraq.

Babayan was not the only individual to publicly finger Gates before his May 1991 nomination. As early as August 1990, PBS's *Frontline* recorded Ari Ben-Menashe, a former Israeli intelligence officer, saying he was present at a 1986 meeting in which Gates—then CIA deputy director—"was pushing" a Chilean arms dealer to ship weapons to Iraq.

Gates has denied the charges under oath, and the CIA steadfastly insists Ben-Menashe and Babayan's allegations implicating the agency "are totally false." So far, the denials issued by Gates and the agency have been vaguely worded. They have failed to address the specific details of the allegations against Gates.

Deep background: Babayan says he can provide proof for his charges. But he says he is holding out for immunity from criminal prosecution before he is willing to tell all. Therein lies the rub. House investigators insist on knowing what they're getting from him before they agree to grant Babayan immunity. Court records from a 1983 sting operation in which Babayan was involved offer some documentary evidence of his involvement in intelligence activities.

Babayan is the scion of a prominent Iranian family, whose shipping business, Cargo and Shipping S.A., was the exclusive hauler of Iranian arms imports until the Shah's overthrow in 1979. Babayan, who worked for Iranian intelligence until the Shah's ouster, says he was hired on by the CIA in 1979 to help topple the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini. Babayan says he worked steadily for the agency throughout the '80s.

According to Babayan, he first met Robert Gates in Geneva in June 1984. Babayan says he was introduced to Gates by M.K. Moss, a longtime Mideast CIA operative also known as Mustapha el Kastawi. At the time, Iraq was at war with Iran. Gates, then CIA deputy director for intelligence, told Babayan to establish an arms supply network to aid Iraq.

Babayan claims that after meeting with Gates, he and several associates set about chartering ships and opening Swiss bank accounts to facilitate the transfer of various arms to Iraq. The munitions came from NATO stockpiles in Europe and from countries such as Israel, South Africa and Latin America. Payment came in the form of Iraqi oil sales profits diverted to the Swiss bank accounts.

Babayan says he had three more meetings with Gates in Arlington, Va., the last one in 1987, at which they discussed the Iraqi arms shipments and other ongoing projects. During the course of the operation, Babayan says he consorted with a variety of figures in the U.S. intelligence community, among them famed Iran-contra operative Ret. Gen. Richard V. Secord. Secord, speaking by telephone

from his Maryland home, calls Babayan's charges "horse manure."

Or is it horse sense? As *In These Times* went to press, most senators on the intelligence committee seemed ready to accept Secord's assessment of Babayan's claims. Nevertheless, a few senators expressed doubts. Sen. Bill Bradley (D-NJ) asked Gates a number of pointed questions about the nominee's dealings with Iraq. In response to questioning from Bradley, Gates admitted that while deputy director and later acting director of the agency, he "certainly was aware of the passage or sharing of intelligence with Iraq."

Gates also admitted that the intelligence sharing occurred without Congress being informed. But Gates said congressional notification was unnecessary since the law covering such activities "is fairly vague as it pertains to liaison relationships" with other nations' intelligence agencies. (Historically, Congress has agreed with Gates and allowed the CIA broad latitude in determining with which countries it maintains a liaison relationship.)

But while questioning Gates, Bradley implied that during the course of the CIA's relationship with Iraq, the agency provided Baghdad with more than "intelligence." In response, Gates would say only that "the materials that

INSIDE STORY

were provided [to Iraq] fell within the context of that liaison relationship." When Bradley continued pressing Gates, committee Chairman David Boren (D-OK) cautioned Bradley against disclosing classified information, and Bradley pursued a new line of questioning.

Despite Gates' denial, Babayan says that Iraq obtained vast supplies of American-made weapons when U.S. law prohibited their export to Iraq. The arms dealer asks how, "despite all these bans and restrictions on him, Saddam Hussein was able to obtain the best military equipment, and 95 percent of it was U.S. equipment." According to Babayan, "You've got to ask yourself how he ... circumvent[ed] all these [arms export] barriers. And the answer is, the CIA had to have helped. ... I know because I was involved in it."

One man who supports Babayan's story is Charles Hayes, a Kentucky businessman who claims he spent 35 years as a contract agent for the CIA. Hayes, who now runs a government salvage firm, says the CIA facilitated the shipment of arms to Iraq.

There is no documentary evidence to support Hayes' claim that he worked for the agency. But Hayes certainly has demonstrated impressive inside knowledge of the agency. In an interview conducted prior to the Gates hearings, Hayes said, "there'll be a mass defection [of CIA top-level CIA officers if Gates is confirmed] and the members in Congress know this." *Newsweek* later reported that more than two dozen CIA officials had, in fact, privately urged the committee to reject Gates.

Hayes, who says he is still plugged into the activities of the intelligence community, says "there's no question, Gates is a liar."

While the Senate Intelligence Committee may accept Gates' story, congressional sources say at least two House subcommittees are continuing their investigations into Gates' role in the Iraqi arms shipments.

Don Ward is a journalist with Florida's Boca Raton News.

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By Salim Muwakkil

WILL JESSE RUN? THAT IS THE QUESTION being asked by black and progressive organizers across the country. The question, of course, refers to whether Rev. Jesse Jackson plans to seek the Democratic nomination in the 1992 presidential campaign. A growing field of Democratic candidates belatedly have begun jockeying for support, and the uncertainty regarding Jackson's intentions has put that process in a state of suspended animation.

That the three-word question needs no further explanation amply demonstrates Jackson's extraordinary name recognition, especially when contrasted with the lesser-known candidates who've already announced. However, the two-time candidate's notoriety is also a burden that could seriously hobble another presidential run.

As recently as last month, the general consensus among Jackson's closest supporters was that he wouldn't run. But the climate has changed in recent weeks, as better-known politicians declined to enter the race and as new economic figures reveal the extent of the country's domestic problems. "George Bush seems to be in serious trouble, for the first time in his tenure," said Leon Finney Jr., a Jackson adviser who ran his Illinois campaign in 1988. "Americans want to see a reinvestment in health care, jobs, housing, infrastructure—in short, all of the very issues that Jesse stands for."

Who, but Jesse? Finney acknowledged his concern that another Jackson candidacy could fuel the public's perception of him as a perennial candidate and a target for ridicule, but the needs of the people outweigh that concern, he said. Without Jackson's charismatic presence in the race, Finney feared that many potential African-American voters would turn away from the political arena. "And who else can speak so eloquently to the needs of urban America, a segment of the country that everyone else seems to have forgotten unless they're talking about a war on drugs and crime."

Moreover, many black operatives in the Democratic Party are concerned that their newly acquired influence would be limited if Jackson decided not to run. Black voters made up 21 percent of the Democratic primary vote in the 1988 elections, according to figures compiled by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies (JCPES), a research group that focuses on African-American issues. Jackson attracted the bulk of those votes, and he has effectively used his political clout to wedge dozens of African-Americans into significant party positions across the country.

"I think it would be a good idea for Jesse to run again," said William Strickland, assistant professor of political science at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and one of Jackson's top political strategists. "Not for Jesse so much, but for us. The politics of the 1992 election will be racist politics. As [Democratic Party Chairman] Ron Brown says, the Republicans will campaign on crime, quotas and Kuwait—K.K.K.—and though white politicians will deplore it, they won't stand up to it."

Sit it out: But other Jackson supporters have urged him to sit out the 1992 election. With Bush riding a wave of popular appeal, prospects for victory are slim. And, they



Uncertainty regarding Jackson's intentions has left Democratic contenders in a state of suspended animation.

Will Jackson give it another whirl?

argue, the three-time loser tag would do significant damage to his hard-charging image. Jackson's failure to run last year for mayor of Washington, D.C., reinforced critics' complaints that he is more interested in the limelight of presidential politics than in the nuts-and-bolts of governance. His entry into the 1992 campaign might lend more credence to those complaints.

And, anyway, as president of the National Rainbow Coalition, former and future talk-show host, syndicated newspaper columnist and "statehood senator" from the District of Columbia, the former civil-rights leader already has a full schedule. He is widely regarded as a perceptive commentator on a variety of subjects and has reached a level of celebrity rarely, if ever, achieved by an American of African descent. Why jeopardize that status for an ill-fated political adventure?

Critics more sympathetic to his political adventures contend that Jackson can't win the presidency because he is indelibly cast as a "black" candidate. Despite his desperate attempts to reach out to other constituencies—marching with workers, standing with striking mineworkers and airline pilots, siding with threatened family farmers—he has failed to catch on among large groups of white voters. Thus far, Jackson has yet to expand his base beyond his black and progressive core.

The "limited base" argument has failed to convince Jackson that his presidential quest is futile. "We got 3.5 million votes in 1984 and 465 delegates," he told *Emergence* magazine. "We had 7 million votes in '88 and 1,200 delegates. It only takes about 2,100 to win. I believe that if I run I can get 10 million votes and 2,100 delegates."

Heir to the black vote: His math notwithstanding, most analysts agree that Jackson has been placed into a political box that effectively limits wider electoral acceptance. "Jesse has the fervent support of the black

community and a lesser amount of support from the left wing of the Democratic Party, but he also has millions of fervent detractors," explained David Bethitis, a senior research associate with the JCPES. Bethitis said the candidacy of Virginia Gov. L. Douglas Wilder is designed to point to those liabilities in Jackson's political profile.

If Jackson decides not to run, Wilder will attempt to place himself in the position to inherit the black vote. Wilder's operatives are avidly courting strategists who worked in Jackson's previous campaigns. And although the nation's first black governor is still de-emphasizing race and staking out a moderate political middle ground, he is increasing his attempts to appeal to black voters.

"Whenever politicians move into national politics, they invariably adjust their platform to appeal to constituencies they want to move to," Bethitis said. The Democrats who vote in the primaries and the various state caucuses tend to be more liberal than those who vote in the general election, so Wilder is ratcheting his campaign a bit to the left.

In addition to Wilder, the other announced candidates at this writing are Nebraska Sen. Bob Kerrey, former Massachusetts Sen. Paul Tsongas, Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton and former Irvine, Calif., Mayor Larry Agran. Former Gov. Edmund Brown Jr. of California and Rep. Dave McCurdy of Oklahoma also are considering joining the other six on the campaign trail.

The Harkin factor: Absent Jackson, analysts predict his supporters likely would split their vote in two directions. The progressive whites who have supported Jackson probably would cast their ballots for Harkin, whose unabashedly liberal campaign themes echo Jackson's. Wilder most likely would attract Jackson's black support. Some analysts, however, are skeptical that the moderate Wilder can energize the black electorate. "I don't think Wilder can get much black sup-

port with his mainstream message," said Strickland. "Harkin, with his left-wing populism, would probably pull more votes than Virginia's elegant, moderate black governor. But it's a close call."

In a development that has bewildered many political observers, Rep. Gus Savage (D-IL), one of the most militant black members of Congress, already has announced his support for Wilder's candidacy. "Savage told me that Wilder said he will stop downplaying his blackness once he goes out on the campaign trail in earnest," said Robert Starks, a long-time Jackson adviser who is a professor of political science at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago.

Savage's expression of support for a candidate he once excoriated for being a "cross-over" politician and whose ideological vision differs from his so profoundly, is an indication of just how strong the lure of race has become in this increasingly polarized society. Ironically, by assuming blacks will support him despite his political views, Wilder is counting on this polarization to boost his chances for victory.

All of these factors weigh heavily on Jackson's decision. Recent reports that the economy is stagnating and that poverty rates are rising would be tonic for a Jackson campaign, if he were waging one. The aura of invincibility that seemed to surround Bush a mere month ago is shrinking and shows signs of vanishing altogether. Aware that Desert Storm triumphalism can no longer divert attention from pressing problems on the home front, the gathering herd of Democratic candidates are sharpening their barbs. And it's clear that the president's general preoccupation with international affairs is garnering less sympathy from a public anxious about domestic issues. The political landscape increasingly looks like Jackson country. However, he probably won't be available to claim it. □

By Joel Bleifuss

In the shadows

If you want to exercise legitimate power in this country it helps to get elected to high public office. One way to get elected is to have an enticing message and then market it. In uncertain times the message of demagogues sells well.

Demagogues gain power playing to people's fears and thereby manipulating how people perceive reality. Once people's perceptions of their world changes, their actions follow suit.

For example, look at the rise of racial tensions in 1988 that were in part fostered when George Bush's presidential campaign plucked the public's heartstrings with a crowbar. Through televised images of a revolving prison gate, the Bush-Quayle TV ad campaign portrayed a dark triumph of the liberal will: a parade of Willie Hortons set free to rape again.

And in 1992, one can bet that the Bush-Quayle campaign will come up with an equally gripping media blitz. A young white family man kisses his wife goodbye, loads the kids into a late model car and then drops them at school. He is next seen standing in a crowded employment office. A personnel officer says, "I'm really sorry. You are better qualified, but ..." The camera fades and a husky, comforting male voice says, "George Bush believes that everyone should have an equal opportunity."

Topsy-turvy: The Communist threat has vanished, but still the world doesn't seem safe. Corporate capitalism offers little solace. Millions of Americans have worked hard, but where has all their wealth gone?

Politicians like Bush assure the public that they are taking care of the nation's business—that every day, in every way, things are better, or at least no worse. But people's experience with daily social reality tells them otherwise. The gap between rhetoric and reality widens.

People are confused and they search for answers. This leads them to consider the alternatives. One alternative being offered is a political option that combines ideological elements of both the left and right. In a variety of guises, this political view is gathering momentum in the United States.

Rev. Sung Yong Moon refers to it as the "third way," but to his neo-fascist brethren in the West it is known as the Third Position.

Howard Goldenthal reports in the Toronto based weekly *Now* that Third Position politics began in Europe in the late '70s. The movement is partial to slogans like "Hitler and Mao united in struggle" and "Long live the fascist dictatorship of the proletariat."

A U.S. version of Third Position politics is exemplified by the following letter to the editor of *New Order*, the newsletter of the Milwaukee-based neo-Nazi group of the same name. The reader wrote: "I'm glad to see that National Socialists are not following the other conservative agenda on such issues as Star Wars, the arms race, world overpopulation, the environment, Iran, Libya, Syria and Nicaragua, etc. It would be absurd and pitiful indeed, if those who oppose the Zionist occupation governments [ZOGs] here in North America were to go along with the policies of those very same cabals."

Goldenthal reports that one hater of the left finds inspiration in working with leftist revolutionaries is Robert Miles, whose CV includes experience as a grand dragon of the Michigan Klan and a conviction for bombing a school bus. As Miles sees it: "A revolutionary storm is coming! Neither left nor right ... but if one cups one's ears, one can hear the howling of the wind ahead! More than just the moon is rising!"

The leading U.S. proponent of the Third Position is Tom Metzger, founder of WAR, White Aryan Resistance. Metzger, who is on trial in Los Angeles for a cross-burning violation, wrote in WAR, the Aryan's hate sheet: "White racial socialism is positive. Race-mixing socialism is negative. Socialist regimes seeking to overthrow Coca-Cola culture and Zionism, and that are ruled by white men who keep their nations essentially white have our support."

Not that Metzger is a racist, he's a racialist. He believes that all races deserve nations unto themselves. In 1985 Metzger attended a Nation of Islam rally at which Louis Farrakhan, another advocate of racial nationalism, was the featured speaker. Metzger dropped \$100 in the collection plate. As he explained to a gathering of 200 neo-Nazis in Michigan, "America is a living carcass. The Jews are living off the carcass like the parasites they are. Farrakhan understands this."

The alliance between Farrakhan and Metzger may

**Thelma Furry: benchmark veteran**

By Sarah T. Carter

Thelma Furry of Munroe Falls, Ohio, is a fighter. She has tried to live up to her ideals and to the oath required of lawyers, including a promise never to turn down any just cause because it is unpopular or because there is no money in it. As a result, 50 years of practicing law in Akron, Ohio, has thrown her into some historic battles.

In the '40s, her clients included unionists and African-Americans subjected to police brutality. In the '50s and '60s, she represented, among others, Communists, abused wives and immigrants. Later she

defended Kent State student radicals, and these days some clients are homosexuals fighting discrimination.

In one recent case, a woman's ex-husband, with six times her income, wanted to stop paying alimony because she had a live-in lesbian lover. Furry, who is 81 years old, convinced a federal appeals court not only that the rule the man was citing applied only to male-female liaisons, but that the case was really about economics, not morality—and even social outcasts had rights. The ruling was, she points out, a landmark decision.

Furry is also a force behind a new citizens' association organized in her hometown to restore

emergency medical service, which was curtailed in 1989. In the wake of a public meeting on the issue, she explained, "We want an open discussion of the facts. When individual people go to city hall and complain, nothing happens. But see how when you form a committee and have a public meeting the mayor comes and talks and answers questions."

Furry learned in her teens that organizations and lawyers have power. Her father, Fred Seibert—a union organizer in the '20s and '30s, when such work took real courage—was often a spokesman for people in trouble. And Furry says she decided to become a lawyer partly "as a result of the Depression period when so many workers were losing their homes and could not find lawyers to represent them in their fight to keep from being evicted."

A Christian Scientist, Seibert opposed any sort of violence, including spanking. "Violence begets violence," he'd say. He did what he thought right, no matter who might disapprove. Whenever he saw someone not getting a fair break, he tried to do something about it. Consequently, he helped his wife with the housework and, when a second baby was born, took over most of Furry's care, thus becoming the central figure in her life.

Doing right also got him blacklisted by Akron's rubber companies. In the '20s he was a socialist. Furry remembers handing Eugene V. Debs a bouquet of red roses at a meeting where the FBI also showed up looking for draft dodgers. In the '30s, attracted to the idea of "giving to each his needs and taking from each what he was able to give," Seibert helped found the Summit County Communist Party, and in 1932 he ran for Akron mayor on the Communist ticket, but lost.

"During World War II," says Furry, "that was the thing to be: we were friends with Russia." But in the '50s, the McCarthy era, admitting you were a Communist usually meant losing your job and being accused of betraying your country.

In the vanguard: Furry joined the Communist Party in the '30s. "I wanted to see for myself if they were really as bad as people said they were, because from what I could see they were fighting for the underdog all the time." The Communist Party, she says, was the first to propose unemployment compensation and social security in this country. "Now a lot of people have to read history to know this."

But in 1950, Furry dropped out of the Communist Party. She says, "The little guys doing the picketing and passing out leaflets and giving money out of their meager salaries were sincere and fighting for the rights of everybody." The party leaders were less inspiring: "I saw that power corrupts."

But she also saw the evil in the anti-communist crusade, and said so—"making my own stand without being a turncoat," she says. Furry publicly states that she did not regret her past associations and would continue "to fight for the right of all peoples, including Communists, for a decent standard of living and full enjoyment of the Constitution."

In 1953, she took on the House Un-American Activities Committee, defending Byron T. Darling, a professor fired by Ohio State University for refusing to say whether he was a Communist. Later that year, she was charged with contempt of court for refusing to testify before Ohio's own Un-American Activities Commission. "I take my philosophy from Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln. ... I do not intend to participate with you in any manner in your work of tearing down the Bill of Rights. I will not tell any of my beliefs, my ideas, my philosophy or my dreams under compulsion," she said at the time. "That is not an American proceeding."

"I was fighting for the right of people to refuse to be an informer," she says. The Un-American Activities Committee attempted to silence people by intimidation, and the attempt worked. "People were

committing suicide, losing their jobs. You know," she says, "the Hollywood liberal people were just about wiped out and Ronald Reagan was one of the informers."

Furry appealed her own contempt conviction and that of a Columbus woman, Anna Morgan, on the basis of the constitutional right not to testify against yourself. "We had to manipulate the Fifth Amendment to protect the First," she says.

Supreme triumph: All their appeals were denied in Ohio, but in 1959 the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously decided both cases in Furry's favor, concluding, moreover, that the Un-American Activities Commission itself was illegal and thus had no right to cite anyone for refusing to answer its questions.

Few lawyers have had the honor of appearing before the nation's highest court. "That's where I got my reputation with my colleagues," says Furry, who adds that they told her, "Thelma, you're doing the things we ought to do. I can't afford it. My son's at Princeton. All my clients would leave me."

Why did she do it? "To live with myself," she says.

"I don't believe in 'my country right or wrong,'" she says. "My country when they're right, and I'll try to do something about it when I think they're wrong. I don't keep quiet; that's how Hitler got into power." She does not believe freedom of speech includes the right to preach hatred or violence. But drawing the line between expressing opinions and inciting violence is tricky. "There's always a gray area," she says. "And that's one of those things you have to keep thinking about."

Furry has always done her own thinking. At 16 she dropped out of high school to elope. She was soon a divorced mother. But perhaps because her father had given her self-confidence with remarks like, "Whatever Thelma makes up her mind to do, she does and does well," she did not give up on becoming a lawyer. Remarrying (she has been married and divorced three times—but still, she says with a smile, keeps some love letters), she went back to high school at age 23 and worked evenings at a match factory. Eventually graduating from the University of Akron, she began law school in 1936.

She graduated from law school in 1940, the only woman in a class of 10, but the dean wouldn't let her take the bar examination. "That wasn't because I was a woman. I never felt any discrimination because of that. It was because of my political activities. Going out on the picket lines. Telling the guys what their rights were and helping them defend themselves in court when lawyers wouldn't."

She fought the exclusion, won and passed the exam in 1941. The law school was put on probation.

Humanist: Furry doesn't consider herself a feminist. "A lot of men aren't getting a fair break either," she says. Her daughter, in fact, chose the traditional role of wife and mother, though she has been active as a volunteer against child abuse.

Furry has always practiced independently. Moreover, in the '40s the Akron Bar Association refused to admit her, and in the '50s even considered disbaring her, as the American Bar Association recommended doing to lawyers who defended people refusing to testify before Un-American Activities Committees. Now she chooses not to join either.

After all this, Thelma Furry was naturally surprised when the Akron College of Law presented her with its 1989 "Alumni of the Year" award. She has received a lot of other public applause too. The University of Akron's library archives now contain many of her papers as well as recordings of her interviews. She has been the subject of one master's thesis, and her Supreme Court briefs are in the archives of the Harvard, Yale and Columbia law schools. Accepting the 1989 award, she commented, "I still can hardly believe it!"

Sarah T. Carter is an Akron-based freelance writer.

have soured in Tripoli in April 1987 at a meeting of world revolutionaries sponsored by Muammar Khadafy. A spokesperson for Canada's neo-Nazi Nationalist Party explained to Goldenthal, "They [the Farrakhan followers] showed themselves to be phonies. They're not true racists. No one can call themselves a racist unless they have respect for the integrity of other races. They didn't have respect for our race or our people."

New alliances? Minister Louis Farrakhan finds more common ground with Dr. Lenora Fulani and Rev. Al Sharpton.

"All three share aspects of racial nationalism and they all engage in demagoguery. These were two key components of fascist movements in the '30s," says Chip Berlet, who tracks right-wing movements for Political Research Associates. "In my book, that makes them leaders of proto-fascist movements."

All three of these African-Americans are also the featured luminaries in *Independent Black Leadership in America* distributed by Castillo International, the publishing arm of the International Workers Party. This group promotes an American-style Third Position politics that is gaining ground. The International Workers Party was founded in 1974 when Fred Newman led 39—mostly female—followers, out of the LaRouche organization after a friendly split.

The International Workers Party is a cadre-based therapy cult that views a person's mental, sexual and political health as an interrelated unit. Within the party, which numbers about 200, each member is guided down life's path by a therapist political adviser who follows the teachings of Newman. The cult's founder is a case unto himself. For a period of time, Newman maintained a spousal relationship with three key female leaders of his organization while carrying on what he describes as a "most wonderful love affair" with his older brother, Maudie.

Many people have never heard of the International Workers Party. But one of the group's fronts is better known, the New Alliance Party. Headed by Fulani, the New Alliance Party, via an attractive political program, has developed quite a following in some segments of the African-American community. Few of her followers realize that she is fronting for a cult led by a white man.

The poop on the populist: Lenny Zeskind, research director for the Atlanta-based Center for Democratic Renewal, spends his time charting the far right. He has followed the rising star of Populist Party presidential hopeful Bo Gritz. Though Gritz' following is not as broad as Fulani's, he is trying to catch up by recruiting on the left. (See "The First Stone," Oct. 2.)

As a Populist Party leaflet passed out at an anti-war demonstration in West Palm Beach, Fla., reads: "The most conspicuous foes of war have been on the left, and we in the Populist Party support their efforts. Yet it is the children of the conservative, white working class who will bear the bulk of the casualties."

Says Zeskind, "The Populist Party is of the same cloth but it's not the same thing as Third Positionism. Gritz appears to be promoting John Birch Society-type conspiracy theories, like the idea that the Federal Reserve is owned by these eight Jewish families."

Zeskind is particularly troubled by Gritz' relationship with the Christic Institute, a liberal, public-interest law firm in Washington, D.C. Gritz and the Christic Institute both champion the idea that a cabal within the U.S. government is running drugs.

"There are some segments of the left whose world view is dominated by conspiracy theories. And that sort of conspiratorial outlook is fundamentally at odds with a world view that sees social, political and economic forces as the motivating factors," says Zeskind. "[The relationship between the two groups] looks like the Berlin transport strike in 1932 when the Communists adopted a policy of inflicting a major blow against the Social Democrats. So they made an alliance with the Nazis, jointly shared the platform and together led the strike." The Communist's slogan: "After Hitler, our turn."

Sarah Diamond is a researcher who is working to expose neo-fascist charlatans who are coopting progressive media outlets. She puts this spin on things: "During the '80s, the right was unified around Reagan, but once Bush got elected the facade of unity began unraveling. At the same time, during 10 years of anti-government activity on the left, a whole group of ex-CIA agents have gained prominence. And now with Gritz, there is an ex-Green Beret. People who basically have good values but don't know what to do, are finding these authority figures very attractive."

The epoch of credulity

Until the Senate Intelligence Committee began pressing CIA Director-designate Robert Gates about charges that he falsified agency intelligence reports, many committee members seemed perilously close to forfeiting membership in the vertebrate subphylum. During initial questioning of the controversial Gates, the credulous senators proved only that they would be fun to have as parents. Most committee members casually accepted Gates' repeated claims that he had no "personal recollection" of various incidents allegedly linking him to the Iran-contra affair, the October Surprise scandal and the U.S.'s involvement in arms shipments to Iraq (see story on page 2). In *These Times*' Washington correspondent John Canham-Clyne, who camped out in committee chambers during Gates' testimony, forwarded a list of items Gates was unable to recall about just one subject—the U.S.'s Nov. 24, 1985, shipment of HAWK missiles to Iran. Four weeks ago, *In These Times* published a detailed account of the CIA's efforts to cover up its involvement in the 1985 HAWK shipment. That account placed particular emphasis on Gates' role in preparing then-CIA director William Casey's fraudulent congressional testimony about the affair. Although various agency officials have implicated Gates in the HAWK cover-up, Gates repeatedly told the committee he had no "personal recollection" of the following incidents.

Finding and forgetting: One of the central documents related to the HAWK shipment was the "retroactive" presidential finding authorizing the missile transfer. The presidential finding, a legal instrument notifying Congress of covert actions, was drafted by the CIA one day after the November 24 HAWK shipment but was never sent to Congress. CIA Deputy Director John McMahon told the Iran-contra investigating committees that he convened a meeting on Dec. 5, 1985, to discuss the finding. At that meeting McMahon says he informed several agency officials—including Robert Gates—that President Reagan had signed the finding. Gates, however, told the committee he could not remember the December 5 meeting.

Hand-off? In a written response to questions from the Senate Intelligence Committee, former CIA General Counsel Dave Doherty says he gave a draft copy of the finding to Gates at a meeting in Casey's office on Nov. 20, 1986—the day before Casey's congressional testimony. During that meeting, which Casey attended, Doherty claims he handed "a copy [of the finding] to Gates with the comment that we had just found this draft [of the finding]." Gates told the committee he doesn't remember hearing about the document—or even learning of the HAWK shipment—until after Casey testified. Casey, of course, never told Congress about the finding.

Totally Unrecalled: Although Gates can't recall discussing the finding on November 20, other CIA officials present in Casey's office claim that the finding inspired a heated debate. CIA National Intelligence Officer Charles Allen, a close associate of Gates, submitted a written statement to the committee asserting that, "I recall raising the issue of the [finding on November 20] in Mr. Casey's office. I recall with great clarity Mr. Clair George [CIA Deputy Director for Operations] informing me in a blunt and abusive manner that the finding did not exist and that I should 'shut up talking about it.'" Gates says he has no recollection of the exchange.

Old nukes ain't good nukes

All the problems finally became too much for the nation's oldest nuclear reactor, the Yankee Atomic plant in Rowe, Mass.—widely known as Yankee Rowe. Citing "reduced confidence" in the plant's safety, regulators from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission began closing the facility on October 1. It's an unusual event—to borrow some nuclear industry jargon—for regulators to shut down an operating plant, let alone the government's pick for an experimental program to relicense old reactors (see *In These Times*, Aug. 21). What worried regulators? A reactor core made brittle by radiation—the very concern that prompted residents, scientists and environmentalists to oppose Rowe's relicensing plan in the first place.

Oops

An "Etc." column last month incorrectly noted that only two states in the union have passed civil rights legislation protecting gays and lesbians. The number is now four. The states are Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts and Wisconsin.

INSHORT

Out of the sweatshop and onto the picket line

EL PASO, TEXAS—Six months is a long time to be off the job, but garment worker Alicia Zapien says her reasons are good.

"I'm striking for the wages I've earned and for fair treatment," says Zapien, a tall, serious woman, perching forward on a chair in the living room of her pink stucco home in Juarez, Mexico.

"But most of all, I'm striking for my daughter," Zapien says, stroking her child's long brown hair. "I want her to be able to have a job where she doesn't have to struggle for decent conditions and decent treatment. I've had to fight so hard in my jobs."

Fed up with sweatshop conditions and unpaid wages, she and her co-workers walked out of Sonia's Apparel and H&R Apparel in El Paso on May 1. Both factories are associated with Andre Diaz, owner of DCB Apparel Group Inc., a Texas-based garment manufacturer. Diaz faces union charges of unsafe working conditions, unfair labor practices and unpaid wages.

"They tell you to work overtime, and then they don't pay you for it. You do it because you need the job. There are plenty of people who are willing to work 60 hours for only 40 hours of pay," says Zapien.

An operator for 18 years, Zapien says working conditions were always pretty bad. But somehow they seemed to get worse. "They told us there was no money and that they'd pay us next week," says Zapien. "But the next week they only paid us half of what we were owed. This sort of thing went on and on, and pretty soon they owed us four, five weeks of pay."

Since she has been on strike, Zapien has been able to spend a little more time with her family at the modest but cheerful house where she has lived all her life. The turquoise painted walls are decorated with family portraits and religious pictures. A television and a globe rest in opposite corners of the living room. The minimum wage she earned as a machine operator in El Paso afforded her family these few comforts. But at what cost?

About one year ago, Zapien began to suffer sharp pains in her sinuses and noticed an unusual discharge from her nostrils. One Juarez doctor told her an operation would cost 1 million pesos, or roughly \$30,000. He said the dust from the machines combined with the extreme cold in an unheated shop had created an infected abscess in her sinuses and warned her that the infection would spread if it wasn't treated immediately. Zapien had no private medical insurance, and her company did



not offer health benefits or workmen's compensation, which is optional in the state of Texas.

Rescue came from the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), which paid for Zapien's medical care. But that didn't solve all of Zapien's problems. Her supervisor warned Zapien that her job might not be waiting for her when she recovered. Four days later, Zapien's colleagues walked out on strike, demanding back wages and a union contract.

A few blocks north of the Rio Grande, El Paso's warehouse district houses 120 garment factories employing approximately 10,000 workers. With its dirt-cheap rents, the district is a mecca for manufacturers seeking to run their operations on a shoestring. The large pool of experienced seamstresses and *operadoras* on both sides of the border makes it easy to fill jobs at the minimum wage or below.

Like Zapien, most of the striking workers are Mexican women who live in Juarez. Many provide the sole support for their families and few speak English. To these women, the fear of losing their jobs looms large: minimum-wage positions are scarce. The Juarez factories a few blocks south pay about \$4 a day. And domestic farm labor, the only other option readily available to Mexican women, compensates back-breaking work at \$40 to \$60 per week.

For years, these women complained only to one another about the working conditions—the poor lighting, rooms that lacked heat in the winter and ventilation in the summer, the dust they breathed all day long. And, although work-related injuries such as Zapien's are not uncommon, sick leave and vacation benefits are.

Despite these management-friendly perks, factory owners often failed to adhere to the laws—sometimes forgetting simple things like paying their employees.

But this year, the problems became widely recognized. Since May, DCB has been at the center of a controversy involving its relationship with its subcontractors. And the sportswear manufacturer has faced investigations by California and

Texas labor officials, the U.S. attorney general and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). In 1992, the assistant attorney general of Texas will hear a case in district court to determine whether Diaz is responsible to the workers employed by his subcontractors.

DCB employs some 30 workers at its in-house operation in El Paso and subcontracts out 90 to 95 percent of its work to private companies. Last year, the state Labor Department found several of DCB's subcontractors guilty of owing \$85,000 in wages to employees. The subcontractors excused themselves by alleging that DCB did not pay them enough to cover their expenses. Nonetheless, the subcontractors were ordered to pay up.

"Diaz says that he cannot afford a contract and cannot afford to pay the back wages," says Carmen Rodriguez, director of La Mujer Obrera, an El Paso organization dedicated to improving the garment industry. "If he can't pay his workers he shouldn't be in business."

It's late morning in the warehouse district and about a dozen strikers have gathered outside the factory of Hector Romero, one of the few subcontractors in El Paso who will work with Diaz these days. Women have brought their own folding lawn chairs from home and are resting and chatting in the heat.

The lazy scene—the empty, dusty streets with rows of low buildings, women chatting in the hot dry sun—belies the violence lying just under the surface, where the factory owners are always watching.

A man telephoned union organizers repeatedly at their temporary digs at the Ramada Hotel in downtown El Paso and threatened to kill them. David Young, an organizing director for the ILGWU, says he received a threatening call one afternoon at the union offices, a stone's throw from where the workers march in front of their former employers with chants and placards. "I know the names of your children," the voice on the phone said. "I know where they go to school."

Police have arrested at least half a dozen union members for strike-related activities that are legal. Other members have been accused of harassing scabs and destroying property.

Strikers say they meet each setback with fresh determination. Araceny Ojeda, a 25-year-old machine operator who joined 11 of her colleagues on a hunger strike during the summer, ate no solid food for 24 days. Wearing denim shorts and an oversized red T-shirt, she observes her co-workers on the picket line with pride. "I didn't feel bad or weak during the hunger strike," she says. "Because we put this kind of pressure on Andre Diaz, we will surely win."

—Katherine Silberger

By David Moberg

NINE AMBULANCES CONVERGED ON CHICAGO's Federal Plaza last week to save the victims of a massacre—a massacre of public health by a medical system that is too expensive, too inequitable and too exclusive, neglecting 40 million uninsured Americans.

One sponsor of this cross-country ambulance drive—which this week will deliver to the nation's capitol 4 million cards demanding universal health care—was Jobs with Justice. Launched four years ago, Jobs with Justice is an effort by 25 major unions, joined now by community, student, feminist and senior groups, to build broader solidarity among union members and between unionized workers and their communities. At its heart is the recognition that individual unions can rarely succeed these days without support from other unions and the general public.

Now health care—the main issue in four-fifths of recent strikes and a growing community concern—is the top priority for Jobs with Justice. But it is not the exclusive focus. Soon the organization will join in the National Education Association's Campaign for New Priorities to cut military spending and shift the money to domestic needs.

While mobilizing support for national issues or major strikes, including Eastern Airlines, Jobs with Justice has also tried to build local coalitions of labor and community groups to fight on job-related issues. For example, on a day of national health care protest one year ago, boilermakers from the shipyards of Norfolk, Va., took part in a local demonstration by calling a one-day protest strike against cuts in their own health care. These local coalitions have been strongest in the Sunbelt and other areas where unions have been weak or where there were not already well-developed citizen-labor coalitions, such as the affiliates of Citizen Action (part of the national Jobs with Justice network and a sponsor of the current Emergency Drive For Health Care).

Mobilization first: Jobs with Justice represents a departure from the dominant, narrow, service-oriented business unionism. For one thing, it emphasizes mobilization of supporters in protests and other actions, whether or not the supporters are members of unions. It asks individual workers—not just union officials—to take part in the coalition by signing a pledge that during the year they will “be there at least five times for someone else's fight, as well as my own.” It tries to build worker solidarity, not narrow organizational interest.

Although Jobs with Justice has decided against getting involved in electoral politics, it emphasizes that winning job-related goals—now, more than ever—requires

Jobs with Justice helps unions broaden support

breaking out of the limits defined by contract-oriented unionism and increasingly restrictive labor laws. Yet despite the overlap with such groups as Citizen Action, Jobs with Justice is distinctive in its focus on conditions and rights on the job. “The Jobs with Justice idea is that the lack of jobs that pay well is the source—as well as a symptom—of all the fundamental social problems in this country,” says Bob Muehlenkamp, a top Service Employees Union staff official.

Communications Workers of America Organizing Director Larry Cohen conceived of Jobs with Justice after a bitter experience in Detroit: while a union representation election was pending, MCI laid off all 400 of its potential union employees and moved the operation to Iowa. Workers need more than jobs, he found himself arguing a few weeks later, they need jobs with justice.

Seeing others' fights as one's own: The organization's first major rallies—some involving more than 10,000 people—were held in Miami and focused on the fight between Eastern Airlines workers and their boss, Frank Lorenzo. But the south Florida Jobs with Justice coalition, still one of the strongest, has taken on many other battles: supporting local transit workers against wage and service cuts, attacking politicians hostile to labor, mobilizing hundreds of picketers for besieged workers in small factories, pushing legislation proposed by the building trade unions to require all contractors with Dade County to provide health insurance and turning out hundreds or even thousands of protesters at trade shows or banquets catering to the city's elite.

In other parts of the country, Jobs with Justice mounted unprecedented demonstrations for workers' causes and won major victories. For example, thousands of marchers descended on the small Texas town of Nacogdoches to protect the jobs of cafeteria workers at the local university. Repeated demonstrations helped workers at the *San Antonio Light* turn back the newspaper's union decertification drive. In Denver, another Jobs with Justice stronghold, the organization mounted successful campaigns to protect workers at the federal mint, the Denver Philharmonic and the *Denver Post*.

“The main reason we started doing this is for someone to see another's fight as their own,” says Cohen. “They'll act under a banner that will be there when they need support

as well. Also, for workers to gain power, they're going to have to go outside the context of the National Labor Relations Act and work in the community context as well.”

Andy Banks, a labor educator at Florida International University and a leader in the south Florida Jobs with Justice, contends that Jobs with Justice must move in the direction of “community unionism.” In a forthcoming article in *Labor Research Review*, Banks defines community unionism as a movement in which important non-labor groups have “some sort of ownership of the

LABOR

unionization effort” and that both union and non-union workers are involved. Union actions must break out of current legal confines, involve groups without an immediate stake, have resources for long-term efforts and recognize that the battle for public opinion is central to the unions' success.

“Jobs with Justice is at a crossroads,” Banks says. “We're either going to become a national mobilization or we'll become a grass-roots, decentralized movement based on a different concept of unionism than business unionism or industrial unionism.”

Cohen wants Jobs with Justice to strengthen its local coalitions. Several union leaders in New York City recently overcame byzantine local politics to form the first important Jobs with Justice organization in a traditional Northeast-Midwest big city labor stronghold. If Jobs with Justice can flourish in such cities, it will gain new stature.

Mixed messages: So far, it looks like Jobs with Justice has won loyalty from participants, says Communications Workers of America Research Director George Kohl. (Service and public worker unions and several industrial unions have been most active in the coalition.) It has created a network among liberal, aggressive union staff and developed a new body of organizing experience. But the rest of the labor movement knows little about it.

That's because of the attitude of the AFL-CIO. Although the AFL-CIO convention delegates endorsed Jobs With Justice, officials in Washington and elsewhere have ranged from cool to downright hostile. Some in the labor establishment are obsessed with fears of a loss of control over members and organizations. Jobs with Justice is frequently at-

tacked for “dual unionism,” an old redbaiting term for establishing a separate union. Still, a few local or state labor federations have embraced Jobs with Justice, and Jobs with Justice leaders in Miami and Atlanta won control of local labor councils.

In Denver the regional AFL-CIO director has repeatedly attacked Jobs with Justice and its leaders and has tried to undermine the coalition's actions. He is suspected of having helped opponents oust the Jobs with Justice leader from her local union office in a campaign that attacked her for spending too much time helping other unions.

Many conservative labor leaders also don't like the occasionally militant tactics of Jobs with Justice. During the Eastern Airlines strike, top Machinist officials initially supported a Jobs with Justice plan to slowly drive cars through several airports to blockade traffic, but then backed out under pressure from the AFL-CIO, according to several insiders.

In June, when Jobs with Justice staged nationwide actions—such as literally tying up insurance companies with red tape—that provided labor rare favorable publicity in hundreds of newspapers and TV news reports, the *AFL-CIO News* did not cover the event. “I don't feel compelled to cover them,” AFL-CIO Director of Information Rex Hardesty said. While lauding the group's public relations and coalition-building efforts, Hardesty acknowledged conflicts “when they purport to speak for all unions nationally.”

Although Jobs with Justice stresses mobilization more than policy, the persisting divisions among unions over health care plans could still be a problem. As Citizen Action leader Don Wiener observed while traveling on the Emergency Drive, “The rank and file is out ahead of the leadership of some groups in favoring the single-payer, Canadian-style plan.” If Jobs with Justice makes its implicit support for a single-payer solution more explicit, conservative AFL-CIO officials may attack.

Some labor officials who sympathize with the Jobs with Justice mission to build solidarity nevertheless question whether forming a new organization makes sense instead of organizing ad hoc strike support or specific legislative campaigns. They doubt labor has resources for another structure. But Cohen notes that the nation's unions combined have more than 35,000 staff members and bring in \$4 billion annually in dues, much of it not used wisely or well. Jobs with Justice could grow much faster with more money and staff, but so far has succeeded with few full-time organizers.

However, “The core problem is the dynamism of the unions or the lack thereof,” says one Jobs with Justice sympathizer. “Where there isn't that dynamism, Jobs with Justice can't make it.”

If Jobs with Justice nurtures the little remaining dynamism in the labor movement, it will justify its existence. Kohl envisions a future of stronger coalitions linking local issues to national issues. Cohen sees Jobs with Justice providing a link between the initiatives of staff organizers and people spontaneously organizing themselves, like the organizing committees of the '30s CIO. “My fantasy is that both will come together,” he says. “I really believe we're on the verge of that.” More than most actions by labor unions, Jobs with Justice is making that very optimistic goal somewhat plausible. □

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This is the second in a three-part series of essays examining the historical context and future implications of the remarkable geopolitical events of 1991, a year that has seen the collapse of Soviet communism, the rise of nationalism worldwide and the war in the Gulf.

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE COLD WAR FINALLY ENDED IN 1989 WHEN the residents of East Berlin began pouring through the once heavily guarded Berlin Wall. For the Soviet Union and for Eastern European countries, the implications were revolutionary: as the wall crumbled, so too did these nations' structures of government and economic life. But for the United States, the Cold War's end has also had profound implications.

The Cold War provided Americans with a ready answer to what their place in the world was. The United States' role, as defined by the Cold War, was to lead a free world alliance against communism. But as the Cold War has ended, long-suppressed questions about the U.S. role have re-emerged: is it America's responsibility to "make the world safe for democracy," as Woodrow Wilson urged in 1917? To what extent should the U.S. subordinate its own aims to that of an international organization like the United Nations or the International Monetary Fund (IMF)? Does the United States have vital interests—beyond its continental defense—over which it should go to war? And what is the relationship between America's foreign aims and its domestic goals?

The debate over these questions has barely begun, but the answers are likely to reflect the continuing tension between two foreign-policy approaches that could be called "evangelical" and "functional." The evangelical approach, which dates from the 17th century Puritans, envisages Americans as a "chosen people" whose goal is to convert the world to their values—whether through example or military intervention. The functional approach—also sometimes termed "realistic"—defines America's goals in terms of traditional national criteria of economic well-being and military security.

In the current debate, the evangelical side can be seen, for instance, in the proposals advanced by American Enterprise Institute fellow Joshua Muravchik or by *Washington Post* columnist Charles Krauthammer. Muravchik, writing in his recently published book, *Exporting Democracy*, favors making the spread of democracy the overriding goal of American foreign policy. By contrast, Alan Tonelson, writing in the July *Atlantic Monthly*, calls for an "interest-based foreign policy" that "would confine itself to securing certain specific objectives that are intrinsically important to America's security and welfare—for example, the protection of regions that are important sources of raw materials or critical manufactured goods, those that are major loci of investment or prime markets, and those that by virtue of their location are strategically vital."

Americans have invariably combined these approaches in all their major decisions—from the Monroe Doctrine to the declarations of war in 1917 and 1941—but where the evangelical has clearly predominated, Americans have suffered. For this reason, it is appropriate, at the beginning of a new foreign policy debate, to review the perils of foreign policy evangelism.

God's Chosen People: The first settlers who came to New England believed they

AMERICAN EVANGELISM:



Cover of *The Bee*, 1888

were establishing a land that would stand as an example of virtue and righteousness. In 1630, John Winthrop, the leader of the Massachusetts Bay Company, reminded his fellow passengers on the *Arabella* that they had not sailed across the Atlantic to find wealth, but to build a "city on a hill" that would serve as a model to those they had left behind in England.

The early settlers thought of themselves as God's "chosen people," New England as the "new Israel," and Europe as the corrupt home of the Catholic antichrist. While taking on different forms, these early attitudes have persisted over four centuries. By the 18th century, Americans' distaste for Catholic Europe had broadened into an indictment of the Old World in general, which they identified not only with unregenerate religion, but also with the persistence of feudalism and monarchy. Two hundred years after that, when, in February 1941, *Time* founder Henry Luce proclaimed that this was the American Century, he counterpoised American virtue to European fascism and communism.

There are three key components of evangelical world view: the conception of America as unique, whether in virtue or in a combination of virtue and power; the conception of the non-American world as depraved, evil and enslaved; and the belief that

the United States has an obligation to transform this world outside itself to fit its image of virtue.

From the 17th century to the 1890s, Americans sought to evangelize primarily through example and through continental expansion rather than by intervening in Old World affairs. In his farewell address in 1796, George Washington saw America's role as giving "mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence." At the same time, he warned Americans not to "implicate" themselves "by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of [European] politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities."

During the 19th century, Americans took an evangelical approach to the Monroe Doctrine, which barred further European colonization of the Western Hemisphere. They viewed the doctrine as a means of protecting the Americas from Old World feudalism. They justified westward expansion as America's "manifest destiny"—an attempt to bring the benefits of American civilization to the continent. Many Americans also saw the Civil War as an attempt to purge the country of last vestiges of Old World class relations.

At the century's end, however, Americans were forced to abandon their splendid isola-

tion. With European powers carving the world up into commercially exclusive colonies, Americans came to believe that if they didn't intervene, they would lack markets for burgeoning industries and farms and would be plunged into another depression as deep as that of the 1890s. After the United States defeated Spain in Cuba and the Philippines, a great debate took place over American objectives, with an imperialist faction, led by Theodore Roosevelt and Senators Albert Beveridge (R-IN) and Henry Cabot Lodge (R-MA), arguing for annexation of the Philippines, and an anti-imperialist faction, led by William Jennings Bryan, bitterly opposed to American overseas colonizations.

But both factions argued their position on evangelical grounds. The imperialists claimed, in Beveridge's words, that God "has marked the American people as His chosen nation to finally lead in the redemption of the world." Bryan, on the other hand, claimed that by trying to incorporate what he saw as an alien and inferior race—the Filipinos—Americans would be "endangering our civilization."

The debate was finally resolved when the United States adopted the approach implicit in Secretary of State John Hay's Open Door Notes, which declared American opposition to the partition of China and support for open

Why converting the world to America's way of life makes for bad foreign policy.

markets. Both factions viewed Hay's initiative as extending to China the same anti-colonial, anti-Old World strictures that the Monroe Doctrine had imposed upon the Western Hemisphere.

Global New Deal: During the 20th century, evangelical aims provided the public rationale for America's decision to enter World Wars I and II and to prosecute the Cold War. In April 1917, calling for a declaration of war against Germany, Wilson told Congress that America's aim would be "to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and aristocratic power and to set up amongst the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles."

Franklin Roosevelt presented World War II as an attempt to secure the "four freedoms," while his Vice President Henry Wallace waxed poetic about a global New Deal. After World War II, President Harry Truman justified the Marshall Plan and NATO on the grounds of preserving American values against the threat of alien Soviet-led communism. When the U.S. intervened in Korea in 1950 and in Vietnam in the '60s, it once again justified military intervention on evangelical grounds—claiming that it was defending democracy against communism.

In all these cases, the U.S. was seen as the unique defender of virtue and its adversaries as Old World embodiments of evil and slavery. But in each of these cases, there were also commercial and military reasons why the United States was acting. These reasons, historians have shown, were important in the minds of policy-makers. But they chose to emphasize the evangelical—either because they believed evangelical considerations were paramount, or because they believed the public would not accept these kinds of functional arguments for military intervention or massive foreign aid.

Britain's junior partner: As Walter Lippmann argued in his classic 1943 study of American foreign policy, *Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic*, American policy-makers, beginning with the Monroe Doctrine, developed a dangerous habit of presenting complex diplomatic strategies as unilateral moral gestures. In the 19th century, American officials were particularly lax in acknowledging American dependency on British power.

In the wake of Britain's defeat of Napoleon in 1815, it became the unchallenged leader of world capitalism. Its navies ruled the sea, and any country that sought to trade overseas had to defer to the British. But the United States enjoyed a special relationship with Britain, benefitting from its free-trade policies and the protection of its navy, while industrializing behind tariff walls and with the aid of British capital.

Most of what were presented as unilateral American initiatives depended on British support. President James Monroe, before instituting the Monroe Doctrine, secured British agreement to back up the feeble American Navy. (Protected by Britain's "stout walls," Secretary of State John Quincy Adams wrote privately, the U.S. could blow a "Republican blast" at Europe.) Yet Monroe presented his doctrine as an expression of independent American power and virtue.

Similarly, before issuing his Open Door Notes, Hay won British agreement for the plan. In both Latin America and China, the U.S. functioned as Britain's junior partner, but the public was largely unaware of the relationship, believing that the U.S. was acting simply on behalf of virtue.

By the time war broke out in Europe in 1914, the U.S. had been locked for a century in an implicit alliance with Britain that it was in the American business community's interest to preserve. Thus, the U.S. declared its neutrality, but from the beginning tilted toward Britain. The Wilson administration vigorously protested German attempts to prevent American shipments to Britain but acquiesced in the British blockade of Germany. And what finally led Wilson to enter the war was the German submarine blockade of the Atlantic. In declaring war, Wilson undoubtedly saw himself as defending Anglo-Saxon democratic traditions against Prussian feudal militarism, but he also saw himself defending America's relationship with



Britain, which for a century had allowed American ships unrestricted passage.

In 1939, after war broke out in Europe, the United States tilted toward Britain in order to defend the two countries' implicit alliance, which now rested on American rather than British superiority. And after World War II, the United States promoted the Marshall Plan and NATO primarily because it feared a recurrence of the unstable protectionist blocs that had emerged from World War I. No important American policy-maker believed that a Soviet invasion of Western Europe was imminent.

Of course, one can still argue in each of these cases whether American action was justified, but the point is that, except in higher policy circles, the functionalist arguments were never debated at all. Instead, politicians and other public officials publicly justified their decisions on evangelical rather than functional grounds. And this led to disastrous results.

Cold war evangelism: Wilson's argument that American entry into World War I would make "the world safe for democracy" laid the basis for postwar popular disillusionment when nothing of the sort occurred. Worse still, the public's resulting revulsion for European affairs made it far more difficult for Franklin Roosevelt to rally Americans to the threat of German and Italian fascism. After World War II, American hopes for a global New Deal and international democracy triggered another bout of postwar disillusionment.

Perhaps, the most damage was done when evangelical arguments were used after World War II to justify foreign aid to Western Europe. To gain public support for programs intended to shore up world capitalism rather than contain world communism, American policy-makers warned of an imminent Soviet takeover. These Red scare tactics probably

prolonged the Cold War itself, setting off a continual chain reaction of moves and counter-moves in Western and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, it poisoned the American political well by encouraging the irrational anti-communism of Sen. Joseph McCarthy (R-WI) and Ronald Reagan. And it led to the futile and destructive American intervention in Vietnam's civil war.

President George Bush continued this deleterious practice. In opposing Saddam Hussein's conquest of Kuwait, Bush was primarily moved by the threat posed to stability in a region on which the world depended for its oil supplies. But in seeking public support, Bush justified American opposition on evangelical grounds, equating Saddam with Hitler and comparing his invasion of Kuwait to the Nazi *Anschluss*. Bush's rhetoric eventually backfired. When American-led forces ousted the Iraqis from Kuwait, but stopped short of toppling the new Hitler, much of the public believed Operation Desert Storm had been a failure.

Bush's use of evangelical appeals was largely opportunistic, but policy experts like Krauthammer, Muravchik and Muravchik's colleague at the American Enterprise Institute, Ben Wattenberg, are trumpeting a new post-Cold War American foreign policy based on evangelism. Their views fit the pattern first established by Winthrop. Ignoring American economic decline, Muravchik and Krauthammer insist on the image of an omnipotent America. Identifying America's world position entirely with its military might, Krauthammer describes the world as "uni-polar."

They also extol American values and America's brand of capitalism and democracy as superior to any other. Muravchik and Wattenberg even gush over the prevalence of American consumer products. "There are few places left where you cannot sit and read *USA Today* over your Coke and Big Mac," Muravchik declares in a recent column. "We import TV sets; we export TV series," Wattenberg gloats.

Krauthammer, Muravchik and Wattenberg argue for making the promotion of American-style democracy the central aim of American foreign policy. "Americans have a missionary streak, and democracy is our mission," Wattenberg writes. Muravchik thinks that "the immediate goal of U.S. foreign policy must be to complete the dissolution of communism." But once this is completed, "U.S. policy still should make the promotion of democracy its main objective." To achieve these ends, the new evangelists favor increased funding for the National Endowment of Democracy, an organization set up by the Reagan administration to intervene in other countries' politics. But if circumstances warrant, they also back armed intervention.

With the Cold War's end, the new evangelists lack an obvious parallel to Old World feudalism or Soviet Communism, but Muravchik, Wattenberg and Krauthammer find their focus of foreign evil in regimes like those of Libya's Muammar Khadafi and Iraq's Saddam Hussein. In *Foreign Affairs*, Krauthammer warns that the proliferation of nuclear weapons has created the basis for a new "weapons state." These nations, according to Krauthammer, have strong central governments, access to modern weaponry and "deep grievances against the West and the world order that it has established and enforces."

"With the rise of the weapons state," Krauthammer writes, "there is no alternative

to confronting, deterring, and, if necessary, disarming states that brandish and use weapons of mass destruction."

America first: The new evangelists' attempt to revive the spirit of Cold War evangelism could prove to be hot air, but it nevertheless poses certain obvious risks. It encourages continuing military expenditures and overseas adventures at a time when the U.S. can ill afford them. And it could potentially entangle the U.S. in conflicts that lack any clear resolution.

In the last two years, for instance, many of the new evangelists were clamoring in the name of democracy for President Bush to grant diplomatic recognition to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. But, as seems apparent now, a premature American overture toward these countries might have severely compromised the Soviet proponents of democratic reform, forcing them to resist American interference in Soviet internal affairs. Bush wisely rejected these pleas.

The history of the National Endowment for Democracy is also instructive on this score. From the beginning, it has been plunged into controversy for picking dubious winners in other countries' politics. In France, for instance, it funded a trade union and student group with ties to a right-wing paramilitary group that had been outlawed in 1982. In Nicaragua, it indirectly subsidized lobbying campaigns in the United States by pro-Contra forces. But even if its choices had been judicious, its very purpose sets a precedent for interference in other countries' politics that it is not in the interest of most Americans to sustain.

But most important, the new evangelism distracts Americans' attention from pressing social problems at home and growing economic competition overseas, substituting a hollow triumphalism for a sober reassessment of American post-Cold War needs. The old evangelism of Henry Luce's American Century had the virtue of being founded on certain inescapable facts about American power and prosperity, but the new evangelism has a certain escapist quality to it. Like the Hollywood movies of the '30s, it is a diversion from the growing unpleasantness of life at home.

Of course, the new evangelism has its share of critics, but some of these are simply espousing their own dubious versions of evangelism. On the right, conservative columnist Pat Buchanan has advocated reviving "America First," the pre-World War II isolationist lobby. Buchanan's and America First's vision reflects that of 19th century evangelism—America as a pristine nation that should not sully itself with foreign entanglements. Thus, Buchanan not only wants to eliminate military expenditures that the Cold War has rendered unnecessary, but he also wants to eliminate foreign aid and American contributions to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Whatever one can say about the harm done by particular American grants or by the conditions that the IMF and World Bank have set upon the recipients of their bequests, foreign aid and multilateral institutions have played and will play an essential role in sustaining world commerce.

The left has promoted its own peculiar version of evangelism. Throughout the 20th century, left-wing critics assumed that in order to discredit American foreign policy, it was sufficient to demonstrate that such policy was based on commercial rather than idealistic ends, as if the American working

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American evangelism

Continued from preceding page

class did not also have a stake in American access to foreign markets. In the past, many on the left also adhered to a kind of inverse evangelism. They not only rejected the view of America as superior in virtue, but projected virtuousness onto other countries. If anything, America was evil and other countries were good.

Even with the Cold War's end, what remains of the '60s new left continues to articulate a kind of rump evangelism—decrying the United States as a seat of vice and rejecting any but the most idealistic motives for foreign policy. When Saddam Hussein took over Kuwait, anti-war critics rejected the idea that Americans should intervene in order to protect the world oil supply. "No blood for oil" was the demonstrators' slogan.

The challenge ahead: In response to the new evangelism, some policy experts like Tonelson, University of Chicago Professor John Mearsheimer and University of California Professor Kenneth Waltz have reasserted the importance of a functional, or realistic foreign policy. Tonelson calls for an "interest-based foreign policy" that would "eschew any notion of foreign policy as first and foremost a vehicle for spreading American values, for building national character, for expressing any individual's or group's emotional, philosophical or political preferences."

Such an emphasis is a welcome counter to foreign policy crusading, but it can be misleading. While the peculiarly American brand of evangelism, based upon a vision of American omnipotence and foreign evil, is dangerously outmoded, moral and even religious considerations continue to be relevant to foreign policy decisions. And the

promotion of moral ends is often in America's interest. For instance, the forgiveness of Third World debts can be justified on both humanitarian and commercial grounds. And while a rigid American commitment to promoting democracy overseas could prove self-defeating, the spread of democracy, while good in itself, could also contribute to international peace and stability.

America's challenge, as this nation enters the next century, will be to discover a foreign policy that transcends both evangelism and narrow realism—a policy that satisfies Americans' democratic ideals, but that is also firmly and openly grounded on the country's economic and social needs. At a minimum, such a policy will be based on these considerations:

- Instead of conceiving the world as uni-polar, Americans have to recognize that the world has become inescapably multi-polar

and that in the future economic power will be more important to a nation's welfare and standing than military power.

- Instead of seeing the Cold War as a triumph of American values and democracy, Americans would do better to see it as the downfall of a peculiar hybrid of feudal absolutism and industrial capitalism. The collapse of communism does vindicate Western notions of democracy, but it also sets the stage for new struggles to redefine and extend democracy.

- Instead of subordinating America's domestic goals to its role as a paragon of virtue or uni-polar "great power," Americans must begin to reverse this historic formula and begin defining their foreign policy goals in terms of their domestic goals.

Can Americans succeed in doing this? Can we overcome patterns that are now four centuries old? Can we, in effect, acknowledge that we are not the "new Israel," but merely a nation like any other—threatened by internal discord and inequality, and buffeted by cycles of economic growth and decline? Our behavior in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War—the president's empty promises to create a "next American century" and official Washington's submersion in the myth of uni-polarity—has not been reassuring. But like a Boston Red Sox fan in September, or a Democratic voter in November, one can always hope.

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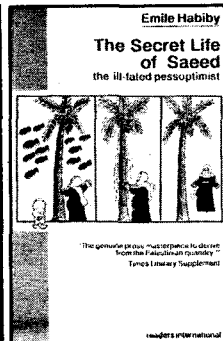
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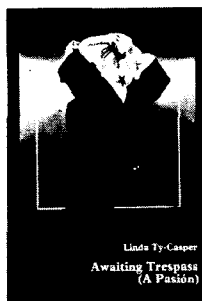
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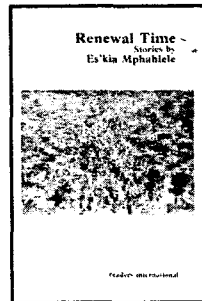
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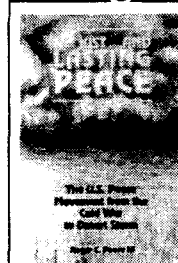
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By Mark Waller

TALLINN, ESTONIA

YOU MAY NOT HAVE NOTICED, BUT YOU'RE in the midst of a revolution," Tallinn's occasional English-language *City Paper* reminds its readers. True, there have been no 10 days that shook the world in this most Nordic of the three newly independent Baltic States, no storming of Soviet power centers and, here at least, no bloodshed.

Even the great Singing Revolution of three years back, a protest in which hundreds of thousands of Estonians rallied and sang day and night for a week at the capital's Song Festival Arena, was hardly a showdown with the Soviets. Yet since then, more or less concurrent events in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have stubbornly loosened Moscow's grip.

The three re-emergent states are now undergoing their biggest transformation since their independence was signed away by Hitler and Stalin in 1939. The final blow was, of course, the failed coup in Moscow—a blessing in disguise, which not only prompted the Baltics to declare full independence but in its aftermath threw the Soviet Union into enough of a shambles as to complicate resistance to the Baltics' wishes. An enfeebled Soviet State Council finally gave in September 6, and on September 17 the Baltics joined the United Nations.

A lucky break: The Baltic States have the inept leadership of the Soviet coup to thank for their freedom. Had the Soviet military been properly mobilized and under clear orders for a total takeover of the Baltics, popular unarmed resistance would have been little match for the Red Army. And many here were only too aware of that fact.

"People, especially old people who remembered the Soviet and German invasions of the '40s, were stunned. They were really expecting the worst," says Riina Reinholm of the Citizen Diplomacy of Estonia. "You could see people standing around in the streets looking dazed and helpless, though many others rallied and demonstrated or went to help blockade key areas against the Soviet troops."

Such blockades proved unnecessary. But the continued Soviet military presence in the Baltics would be a major threat if things go bad in Moscow—and because of this, it poses a security problem.

About 150,000 troops are based in Estonia, which houses key Soviet air bases and the Paldiski naval port. "We cannot be sure of the Soviet military command while the situation in Russia remains unstable," says Rein Tamme, chair of the Estonian Parliamentary Defence Committee. "We want to get the issue of Soviet withdrawal resolved as soon as possible."

Latvia has already done just that and the 80,000-strong Soviet force will leave the country by the end of next year. Ending the Soviet military presence in Estonia and Lithuania may take a little longer, and as yet no departure deadline has been fixed. According to Tamme, some Soviet forces will leave Estonia this autumn. But he sidesteps questions about deadlines or about what conditions the Soviets are setting for their departure. What is clear is that while the Soviet military is still at large in the Baltics it constitutes an uncertain factor. Military force, not socialist revolutions, joined the three countries to the Soviet Union 51 years

The Party's over—now comes the hard day after

ago. The perception of military occupation looms large in people's attitudes to their newfound independence.

Secrets and smoke: The same is roughly true of that other hand of Soviet military rule, the KGB. Although officially closed down and preparing to depart, the KGB office in Tallinn has still-unfinished business. As a key agent in thwarting Estonian nationalism over decades, the Soviet security network

THE BALTICS

reportedly possesses 29,000 files on Estonian individuals and organizations—much-sought-after information detailing not only the KGB's activities but its informers.

"Thousands of people had direct and indirect dealings with the KGB," says Green Party representative Alo Merilo. "Some of them probably are now in leading political positions and would hate to see their files made public."

Perhaps that is why the Baltic governments have not forced the issue of opening up the KGB offices to independent scrutiny. "Whoever were to get hold of those files would suddenly have a lot of power," observes Merilo.

The Tallinn KGB headquarters is guarded, supposedly sealed, by the local police, though the authorities say they are powerless to intrude further. From time to time, smoke and paper ash billow from the office chimneys. For better or worse, a mountain of files is being systematically consigned to the flames. As with the Soviet military, the withdrawal of the KGB is not regarded as a clean break with the past. Rein Tamme argues that the process is more of a transition toward the creation of Estonia's own armed forces and security service, using the resources, training and expertise already in

Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia are free from the Soviet Union—but not its system. "It's not just a question of changing the government," says one Estonian. "People themselves have to change, and that will take a long time."

place, just as the civil police was created out of the former Soviet militia.

"What it amounts to is a change of clothes for those in power," says Senan Saharov, a sound engineer who lives in Tallinn. "Same people, different uniforms." Saharov's entire family was among the nearly 40,000 Estonians deported as undesirables by Stalin to Siberia, where Senan was born. Growing up back in Estonia with that stigma was bad enough, but his refusal to join Komsomol, the Communist Party youth organization, sealed his enmity to the KGB.

Saharov is typical of the many Estonians who are skeptical about dramatic changes for the better in their country following independence. "It's not just a question of changing the government; people themselves have to change, and that will take a long time."

A weighty corpse: Such comments underscore the degree of uncertainty and insecurity that pervades much of the post-independence climate in the Baltics. It is not only a question of the Soviet military presence. Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians are keen to point out that they are restoring their independence, not winning it. Yet the countries they have inherited from the Soviet system bear little resemblance to those they lost five decades ago. The Baltics are lumped with a weighty corpse that smothers practically every aspect of society and economy.

"We're having to start from the very beginning," says Asser Murutar, professor of sociology at Tartu University. "There is very little existing infrastructure we can use." One can see what he means. The endless acres of dilapidated, polluting factories in north-east Estonia are the center piece of the country's energy industry. Twenty-five percent of forestry rots on the ground. The railways are in so bad a condition that a planned trans-Baltic express route from Finland to Poland was abandoned.

Unlocked from the Soviet command economy, the Baltics are faced with having to make their own economies both sustainable and able to satisfy their people. Privatization and foreign investment are the buzzwords—the former seen as the key to most economic ills. Nationalization and collectivization are anathema, associated only with Soviet economic inefficiency and waste. Emulation of the West is the goal. But while both conservative and left political leaders say they want to avoid Western social and economic crises, none gives a convincing idea of how.

Privation is creeping in. Food and commodity shortages are the most obvious, but the specter of unemployment looms large as vast state enterprises are trimmed or closed. "People are very poor," says Tallinn Councillor Mario Kivistik. "And most probably the situation will worsen before it improves."

Plans to cushion the impact through a coordinated social security program are virtually non-existent. One gets the feeling that attitudes about future economic development are motivated only by determination

to get rid of the Soviet past.

The honeymoon never started: Foreign aid and investment is tantalizingly unpredictable, though of massive importance. But there's a tendency to naiveté. An agreement that Estonian Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar signed with wily U.S. billionaire Ronald Lauder last March, for a takeover of the Kunda cement works, was later left unratified when Estonian economists discovered that Lauder stood to profit way over the Estonian partners. Lauder has since struck more successful deals, which he says will "send signals to American companies that it's possible to do business in Estonia."

Social tensions borne of economic crisis are compounded by national-ethnic tensions. The Soviet invasion and occupation was accompanied over the decades by Russification, the wholesale import of cheap Russian labor to run new industries. Large sections of these have long resisted Baltic independence in favor of the Union but now find themselves having to integrate in the new societies.

Few of the Russians living in Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania ever bothered to learn the language of their host republic, which was officially relegated to the sidelines. The hot issue now is the criteria for citizenship, and numerous groups are lobbying for this to be restricted to those people, and their descendants, who lived in the Baltic States before 1940. A more flexible approach would give citizenship through proven naturalization. The leading political force in Estonia, the

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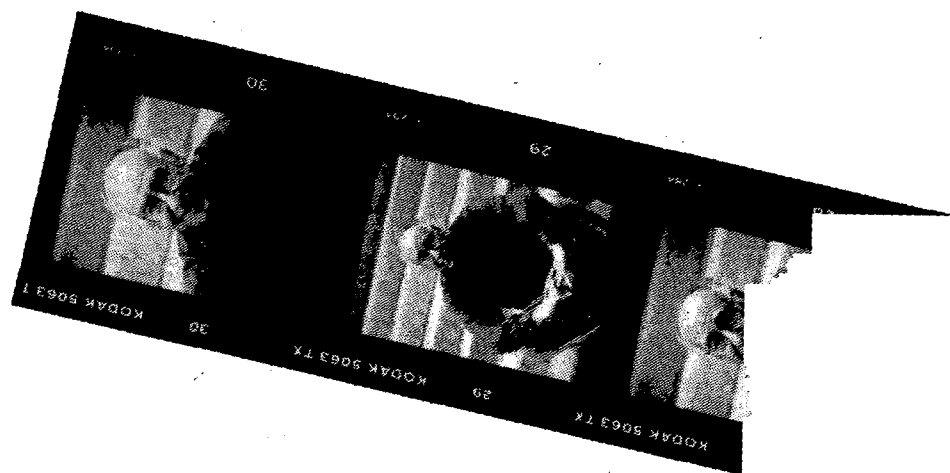
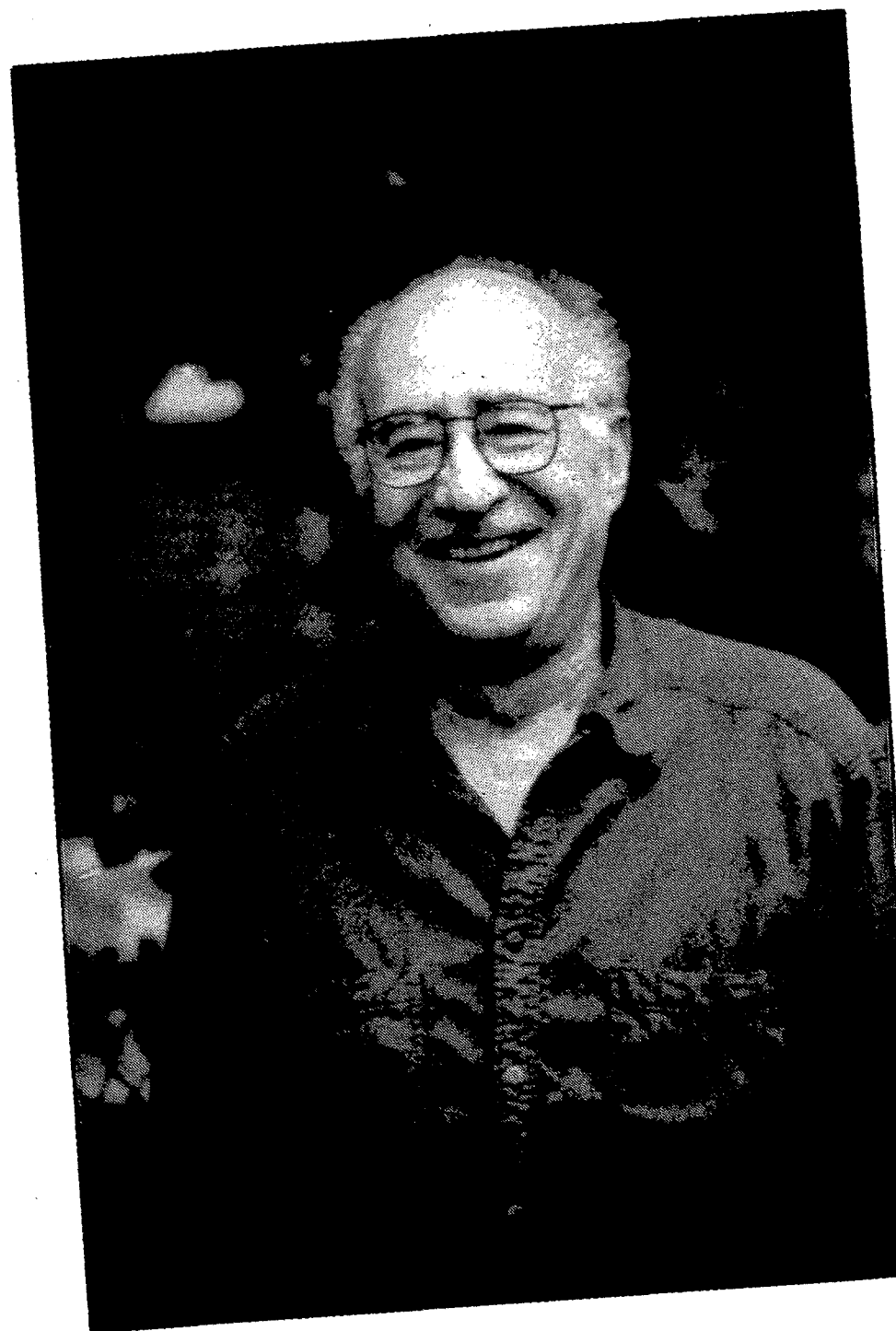
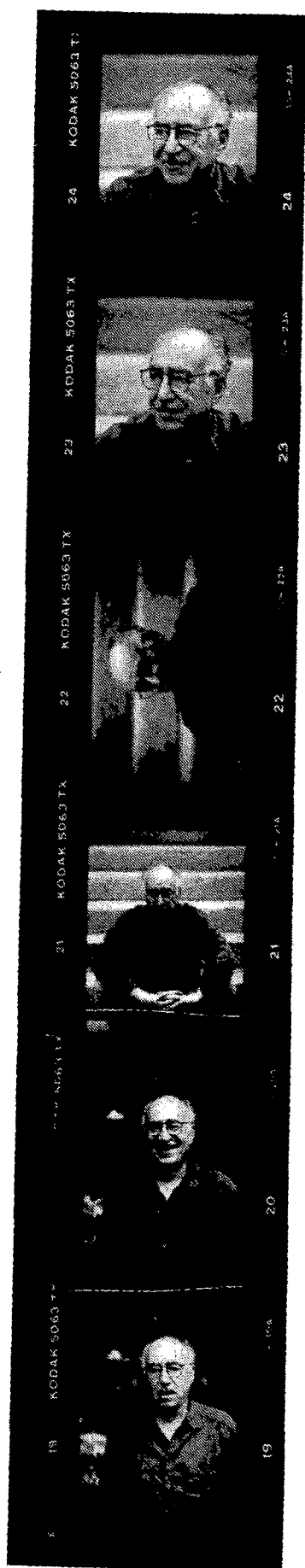
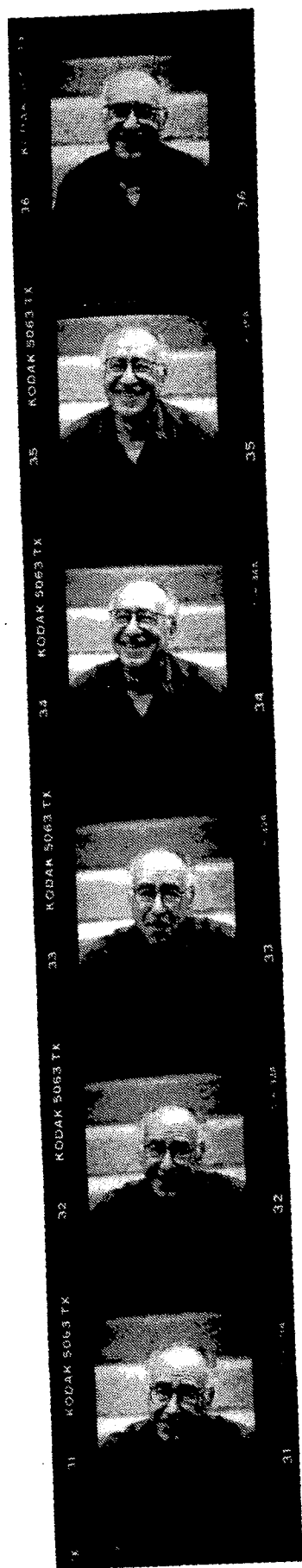
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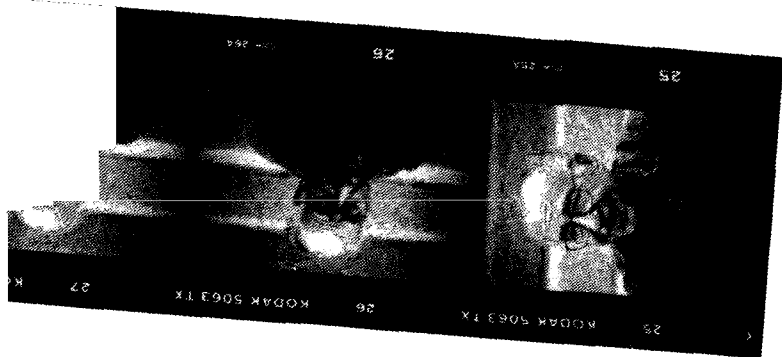
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THE ENVIRONMENTAL PRESIDENT

Continued from front cover

were capable only of reaching the now-independent nations of Eastern Europe, not the Soviet Union, and were therefore militarily useless. And the day before Bush's announcement, the Senate had voted overwhelmingly to kill a railroad-mobile version of the MX. Bush gave up nothing here.

Furthermore, while Bush said these actions were taken because the Soviet threat is gone, he once again called on Congress to fund the B-2 stealth bomber and the SDI Star Wars program. And he neglected to cancel the \$20 billion Sea Wolf attack submarine, which was specifically designed to hunt down Soviet subs thought to be a first-strike threat. Still, when all is said and done, this step back from the nuclear arms race will accelerate a shift away from military spending, which in turn will open political space for advocates of different federal government priorities.

This, however, was not what the president intended. As he made clear in his speech announcing the cuts, Bush has no desire to reorder federal priorities. Instead, his action was intended to serve as a pre-emptive strike, one that would stop Congress from reducing military spending even further. "Some will say these initiatives call for a budget windfall for domestic programs," Bush said. If so, he explained, they are mistaken. "The peace dividend I seek is not measured in dollars but in greater security."

And what is this greater security? Not surprisingly, it is a "strategic concept, guided by the need to maintain the forces required to exercise forward presence in key areas." Or, in plain English, it is a determination to keep playing world policeman, especially in the Third World—and also an intention to use military means to perpetuate American dominance over Europe and Japan, now that this can no longer be accomplished by economic means.

From a military security point of view, much of what Bush wants is senseless. For example, the Pentagon plans to leave 150,000 troops in Europe, at a cost of tens of billions of dollars a year, even though they were there—or so we were told—only to protect against a Soviet invasion. Similarly, the president wants to build 60 B-2 bombers, at \$850 million a pop (each one equal to a year's worth of the Head Start program), when its anti-Soviet mission is also gone.

The same is true of SDI, which would cost \$4.6 billion this fiscal year if fully funded and much more in each succeeding year. Bush argues that SDI is needed to stop "power-hungry tyrants" in the Third World from making sneak attacks on the United States. But none of the real existing tyrants have the ability to produce a nuclear bomb, much less the capacity to send one up in an ICBM. If such a tyrant ever acquired a nuclear bomb and then decided to use it against the United States, it would more likely be carried in a suit-

case than in a ballistic missile.

All in all Bush would reduce the more destabilizing short-range nuclear weapons, and he would increase the disparity between American and Soviet nuclear capabilities by continuing nuclear weapons development apace. That is why he did not include a ban on future nuclear testing—without which new systems cannot be developed—and why Gorbachov, while welcoming Bush's action, noted that he had omitted such a ban and called for mutual cessation of testing.

Members of Congress and the press were also quick to point out many of the contradictions in Bush's initiative. Only days before his dramatic speech the Senate had come within two or three votes of stopping further production of the B-2 and of slashing SDI spending. Now advocates of these programs like Sen. Sam Nunn (D-GA) are saying that the cuts Bush asked Congress not to make are going to be hard to stop. Bush's unilateral cuts will also make it easier for Democrats to advocate further reductions in a military budget half of which is directed against a now officially non-existent Soviet threat. And it will give impetus to Democratic efforts to reopen the budget agreement under which cuts in military spending cannot be transferred to domestic programs.

Politically, Bush is most vulnerable on the budget issue. A large majority of Americans understand that there is no Soviet threat and that no other nation is capable of endangering the United States. And while George Bush defines national security in military terms, Americans are coming to realize in ever-increasing numbers that our nation is rotting from within, and that in the absence of an external military menace, security means something quite different than the ability to police the world. Rather than continuing to spend \$290 billion a year for new weapons and unneeded troops in Europe, Korea and other imperial outposts, this money should be spent to increase the security of the American people in their daily lives. At least half of the \$290 billion now reserved for the military could be cut and used for the whole range of social needs facing the nation—with money left over to reduce budget deficits.

Of course, money alone will not solve domestic problems like education or environmental degradation. But as anyone familiar with these problems knows, without money things will continue to deteriorate and the debate about how to solve our domestic problems will be pointless.

Inadvertently, perhaps in a desperate attempt to seize the political initiative, Bush has opened the space in which all these issues can be brought into the center of public debate. Now it's up to the presidential hopefuls in the Democratic Party to respond boldly. If they do, the seemingly unbeatable George Bush may collapse like the recently invincible Soviet military machine.

The testing scam

IT'S IRONIC THAT ON THE VERY PAGE IN WHICH John B. Judis sings the praises of George Bush's national testing proposal in "Why Bush voucher plan would be a poor choice" (*ITT*, Sept. 18), another article profiles education reformers critical of standardized tests ("A New York district's choice for schools"). Apparently these experienced classroom practitioners know something that Judis does not: standardized tests contribute to the ruin of our educational system, not its improvement.

If the U.S. lags behind other nations and fails to provide a good education for many of its children, it is not due to lack of testing. During the '80s, American schoolchildren became the most overtested students in the world. Research by the National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest) reports that more than 100 million standardized tests are now administered each year. A typical student must take several dozen standardized tests before graduating.

Despite all this testing, school improvements have not occurred. In fact, many educators and researchers would agree that the overemphasis on testing has been part of the failure of school reform. Adding yet another test will no more improve education than taking the temperature of a patient more often will reduce his or her fever.

What makes testing so harmful is its impact on curriculum and instruction, as well as its use as a gatekeeper that unfairly sorts students by race and class. When tests become the basis for important decisions, like school aid and salaries, teachers have little choice but to "teach to the test." The harm is greatest for students in the lower tracks whose schooling is often reduced to "drill and kill" to raise test scores. This method of instruction virtually guarantees they will not learn higher-order academic skills.

Far from reducing the disparity in educational achievement among students, a national test will probably widen this gap. Under the president's proposal, strong consequences are attached to these tests: students must pass in order to be eligible for college admissions or employment. Unless resources are committed to ensure that all students have a fair opportunity to do well, children from low-income and minority-group backgrounds are most likely to fail and face severe repercussions.

Instead of more pointless testing, American education needs a fundamental overhaul. Changes in assessment must be part of the package, but so must improvements in curriculum, teacher training in new instructional methods, and a fairer distribution of educational resources. To advance this position, major civil rights organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), as well as educational organizations, have joined FairTest's "Campaign for Genuine Accountability in Education," which opposes national testing.

Cynthia Schuman
Executive Director, FairTest
Cambridge, Mass.

Selective noblessedness

SEN. JOHN DANFORTH (R-MO) OPPOSED THE INCREASE in the minimum wage and supported gutting the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards.

According to pundit John B. Judis, this is



the record of a modern practitioner of the ancient rite of noblesse oblige (*ITT*, Aug. 21).

And now Clarence Thomas will skate by into the Supreme Court without explaining exactly what he owes to Marse Danforth. Some noblesse.

Robert C. Sommer
New York

Political correctness at work

GREGORY STEPHENS' CRITICISM OF SLACKER'S whiteness (*ITT*, Sept. 18) is perfectly timed for today's new McCarthyism. If you don't have just the right number of "minorities," you'll be accused of being racist. I am so sick of misplaced righteousness in the name of politically correct ableism. The Austin scene is not racially biased or sexist or any buzzword of late. If you know Austin, you would realize Sixth Street—that "clubland," as Stephens dubs it—is nothing but a bland shopping mall of commercialized whitey-tourist-pleasing goods that only a band like Trickle Down could play in. Go to East Fourth, where Dari (yes, a black man) had one of the coolest warehouses with the most innovative music art on the scene. And that's what it's about, my friends and fellow slackers—the scene. You're either in or you're out. It's a free-floating world in Austin, and just because Stephens feels Rick left out people of color doesn't mean there isn't always an open door. So, as L.L. Cool J would say, "See ya!"

Karen Paperno
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Cults do exist

IN RESPONSE TO DEBBIE NATHAN'S ARTICLE "THE Devil makes them do it" (*ITT*, July 24):

I am not a fundamentalist. I am a feminist scholar and a socialist. I do not believe in Satan. I do believe that Satanic cult abuse exists. I am one of many who have survived

it and who are speaking about it.

When women started to speak about rape, we were called liars. When women began to speak about incest, we were called crazy. Supposedly, we were mistaking our fantasies for reality. Now that we are speaking about cult abuse, we are being accused of irrationality and of feeding the fires of fundamentalism.

My own memories, the memories of other survivors and feminist therapists' work on this issue convince me. Christian extremists are trying to capitalize on cult abuse to further their own movement. The situation is certainly ripe for civil-liberty violations. But that does not mean we can ignore cult abuse.

I am not surprised that police have had little success combatting Satanic abuse. Cult members are, for the most part, not beer-drinking teens. They are often "respectable," churchgoing people. Their victims are usually their own children. In my opinion, cult members are not worshippers of Satan. The devil does not make them do it. Satanism is a mere excuse for doing in groups what many adults do individually in the privacy of their homes—rape, beat and torture children for sadistic pleasure.

It would be comfortable to believe that Satanic abuse is a figment of the fundamentalist imagination, but many people dedicated to exposing this oppression are not fundamentalist or even sympathetic to Christianity. But Satanic cult abuse does happen. It happened to me.

M. Hart

Materialism

HERE'S ONE FOR "J.B.J. DEM SOC" (THAT'S JOHN Be-the-Neocon-Judis to totally rad radicals who still think they were making a revolution when they shat on the college dean's desk in 1968). I know those "rads" will be canceling subscriptions and sending

J.B.J. nasty notes over his continued heresy (*ITT*, June 12). Consider this reader a fan.

J.B.J. might not like me saying so, but he's one of the sharpest Marxists in the popular press. Bah! to all that pea-brained sloganeering (i.e., *The Militant*, oh, how Trotsky would weep) and scholarly posing (i.e., *The Nation*). Three cheers for good old pragmatic Marxist materialism! Yo, J.B.J., keep it up, home-boy. A few of us out here recognize rock-solid democratic socialism when it shimmies down the page.

What a terrible shame that in the quibble over what's "left" and "right" the word "socialism" is rated as hopeless. Sad it is. It was, after all, our red flag before the goof-ball power-crazed democracy commies put their hammer and sickle on it!

And, J.B.J., don't let those fools who condescend to pronounce Cuba "Kooba" and Nicaragua "Neekar-r-gua" give you a lot of their shrill crap. Infantile Third Worldism is a movement "nudnik" that us Marxist materialists must pray will wake up. Meantime, I'm happy *ITT* is after that big unity of a new new left, but I'm happier to see that old dem-soc banner borne so crisply in the work of its top ideologue—er, ah, I mean, broad-general-political-concept writer.

Just don't stop!

Scott Holmquist
Redway, Calif.

Shame on U.S.

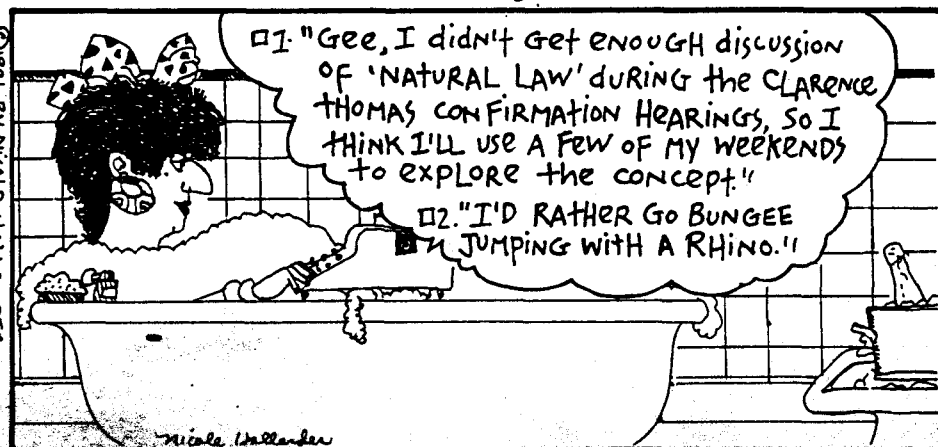
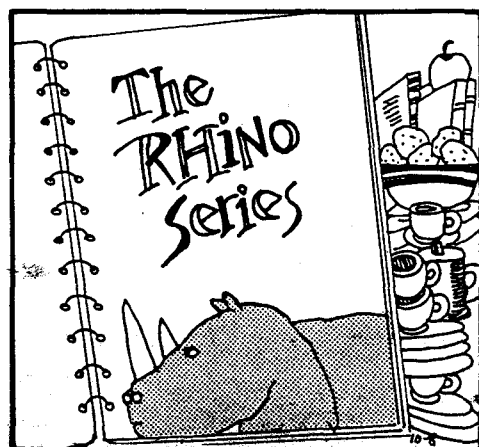
MORDECHAI SPECKTOR'S ARTICLE, "DEATH OF A warrior" (*ITT*, June 12), about David Sohapp, an Indian-rights activist, reflects unfortunate actions on the part of our government. Sohapp was taken from one prison to another in five states. This is the same treatment that was given American Indian Movement (AIM) members so that their lawyers could not locate and assist them. I advise all to read *Agents of Repression* by Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Vael (South End Press, Boston). It will inform you about the shameful record of our government in its treatment of AIM members.

Members of our Congress should nullify the Black Bass Act. A committee should be set up to investigate the nefarious acts of our government that are seemingly approved by the Justice Department.

Marie Davis
Ridgway, Pa.

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

Bush administration's Mideast charade

The fury of supporters of Israel against President Bush boils down to the following:

In pursuit of a conference on the Middle East, Bush and Secretary of State James Baker are blackmailing Israel into perilous concessions in its security, seeking to withhold \$10 billion in desperately needed loan guarantees. To satisfy the demands of the Arab states on Palestinian rights they are arm-twisting Israel into a colloquy where the latter will be compelled to yield up significant portions of lands it has occupied since 1967. Finally, with his reference to himself in his September 12 press conference as "one lonely little guy" fighting "a thousand lobbyists" Bush is setting the stage for an onslaught on the Israeli lobby in the United States, tapping latent well-springs of anti-Semitism, whipping up resentment at the ungrateful recipient of some \$47 billion in U.S. aid since 1949.

Much of this picture is ludicrously misconstrued. Within Israel's grasp is a diplomatic denouement which, a decade ago, it could scarcely have dreamed of. Before the U.S. emerged as the unchallenged arbiter of the Middle East's political agenda, the international consensus on a proper path to peace and to recognition of Palestinian rights centered on an international conference co-sponsored by the U.S., Soviet Union and other major powers. Such a conference would call for settlement on internationally recognized, pre-1967 borders, full guarantees for all states in the region including Israel, and a new Palestinian state.

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

All of this has now been swept away. The United States has achieved its long-term goal of a conference held on its own terms. A Palestinian state is nowhere on the agenda. The Bush-Baker plan is in fact the Shamir-Peres plan of the former Likud-Labor coalition: no "additional Palestinian state" (Jordan being such) and—to take the 1989 State Department language—no "change in the status of Judea, Samaria and Gaza other than in accord with the basic guidelines of the [Israeli] government." This, by definition, excludes Palestinian rights.

In its projected conference the administration has permitted Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir veto over any Palestinian delegate he doesn't care for. Palestinian "rights" will amount to parish pump elections to dog-catcher and garbage management, all under Israeli military supervision.

This is an extraordinary triumph for rejectionism, which in anything but an Orwellian mangling of the word means U.S.-Israeli denial of Palestinian rights as embodied in U.N. resolutions. An added virtue for Bush in an agenda so profoundly favorable to Israel is that it has somehow been presented as virtually anti-Semitic in its indifference to Israel's security. This absurd misrepresentation makes it easier for Arab oil powers in the region to abandon their facade of support for Palestinian nationalism and recognize Israel, forging a regional entente under U.S. supervision.

In this perspective the row over the \$10

billion guarantee can be seen as virtually irrelevant, involving only a four-month delay. No one challenges the guarantees in principle. But why is the U.S. issuing them at all? The money will be used to build roads to the West Bank and finance fancy villas in the "Jerusalem" ever-expanding over Palestinian lands. If the money is to be put to truly humanitarian use, why not allocate it to the Palestinian refugees from Kuwait or for that matter to Jews seeking to emigrate from Israel? A recent poll in *Ha'aretz*, a Hebrew-language Israeli newspaper, indicated that the percentage of such Jews wishing to emigrate is higher than from any Eastern European country with

The U.S. has achieved its goal of a Mideast peace conference on its terms.

the exception of Czechoslovakia.

The only impediment to the denouement sketched in above is Shamir and his ultra-rejectionist colleagues, whose posture essentially differs from the administration's only in its tactless bellowing of goals that a conference would decorously satisfy. But the fight with Shamir is scarcely disadvantageous to Bush.

Here we come to the famous press conference where the president portrayed himself as "one lonely little guy," duking it out

with "powerful political forces."

As Bush and his advisors must have known, the cameras of the evening news shows swivelled from the lonely little guy to American Jews flooding Congress to implore their representatives to deny the president the breathing space he had been seeking. A moment later the president was telling the cameras that "I'm going to fight for what I believe. It may be popular politically but maybe not. But that's not the question here, whether it's good 1992 politics."

No one had mentioned 1992. The president and his advisors could well have a very hardball strategy in mind. For example, the populist Democrat from Iowa, Tom Harkin, now savaging "George Herbert Walker Bush" for failing to put money in the pockets of ordinary Americans, is one of the largest recipients of Israeli-oriented PAC money in Congress. It would not be so hard for a surrogate of the president to ask publicly whose pockets Harkin's loyalties are really directed towards.

Israel's lobby in the United States is of fabled potency. Shamir and his thousand lobbyists should not believe in their own propaganda and instead read up on the fate of the old China lobby, once equally fabled in its prowess in protecting the interests of Taiwan but which shrivelled the moment the U.S. changed its policy. It would not take a determined president very long to whip up resentment at the "powerful political forces" seeking to bully the U.S. government and controvert the national interest. Then see how long the lobby would intimidate the Congress which has for so long sought its funds.

Distributed by Alexander Cockburn

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Dr. Bertell Ollman, the creator of "Class Struggle," is a full Professor in the Dept. of Politics at N.Y.U., author of *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, and co-author of *Studies in Socialist Pedagogy*. A distinguished political theorist and teacher, this is Dr. Ollman's first essay into gamesmanship.

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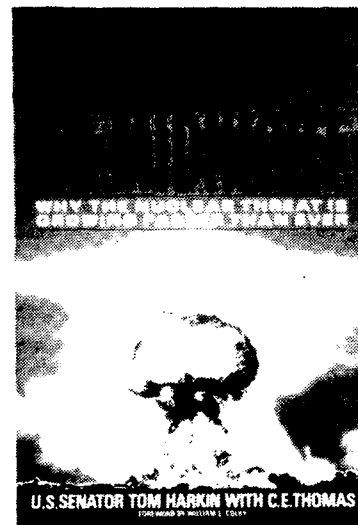
- The most likely route to nuclear war is through client-states or third world nations;
- While the number of nuclear weapons may have been cut, we are now manufacturing more powerful and sophisticated weapons that could destroy the world a hundred times over;
- Manufacturing a nuclear arsenal is destroying our society from within. Funding is no longer available to solve the drug problem, inadequate education, the pollution of the environment, crime, and more.

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Attacks have recently been escalating in the press on so-called "political correctness," often particularly targeting higher education and its current effort to increase the cultural diversity of the curriculum, the student body and the faculty. Concerned generally by the ill-informed, anti-intellectual and sometimes hysterically abusive tenor of these attacks, many of us who teach and study in universities have become convinced of the need for a concerted effort to counter them. Teachers for a Democratic Culture (TDC), whose statement of principles appears below, aims not only to provide a means of answering malicious attacks but also to call attention to the positive effects in education and culture of democratizing trends such as multiculturalism.

Copies of the TDC statement were mailed out in mid-September. These attracted news stories in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and the front page of the *New York Times* ("In Battle on Political Correctness, Scholars Begin a Counteroffensive"). The initial response has been substantial, not just from humanities professors—often the main target of the anti-PC assault—but also from academics in many fields and levels of education all over the country (including school teachers and graduate students) as well as from others outside the university.

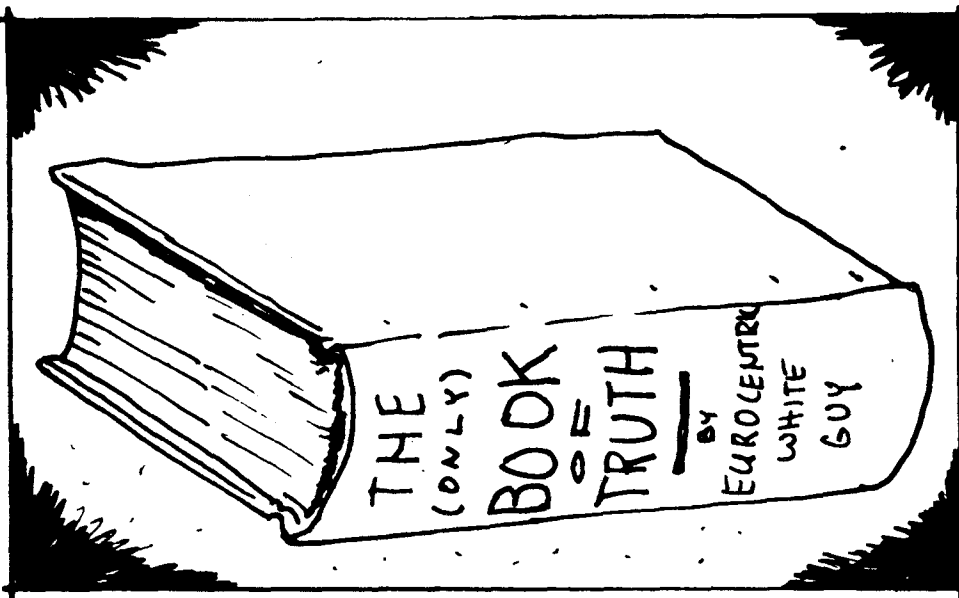
A variety of activities for the organization are being discussed. These include a conference, a newsletter and perhaps support services for teachers coming under fire from PC vigilantes at their schools. We welcome further suggestions.

For more information, write to: Professor Gerald Graff, Department of English, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL 60637.

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE UNITED STATES have lately begun to serve the majority of Americans better than ever before. Whereas a few short years ago, institutions of higher education were exclusive citadels often closed to women, minorities and the disadvantaged, today efforts are being made to give a far richer diversity of Americans access to a college education. Reforms in the content of the curriculum have also begun to make our classrooms more representative of our nation's diverse peoples and beliefs and to provide a more truthful account of our history and cultural heritage. Much remains to be done, but we can be proud of the progress of democratization in higher education.

A vociferous band of critics has arisen, however, who decry these changes and seek to reverse them. These critics have painted an alarming picture of the state of contemporary education as a catastrophic collapse. This picture rests on a number of false claims: that the classics of Western civilization are being eliminated from the curriculum in order to make race, gender or political affiliation the sole measure of a text's or subject's worthiness to be taught; that teachers across the land are being silenced and politically intimidated; that the very concepts of reason, truth and artistic standards are being subverted in favor of a crude ideological agenda.

It is our view that recent curricular reforms influenced by multiculturalism and feminism have greatly enriched education rather than corrupted it. It is our view as well that the controversies that have been provoked over admissions and hiring practices, the social functions of teaching and



University professors unite against anti-PC onslaught

scholarship, and the status of such concepts as objectivity and ideology are signs of educational health, not decline.

Contrary to media reports, it is the National Association of Scholars, their corporate foundation supporters and like-minded writers in the press who are endangering education with a campaign of harassment and misrepresentation. Largely ignorant of the academic work they attack (often not even claiming to have read it), these critics make no distinction between extremists among their opposition and those who are raising legitimate questions about the relations of culture and society. And though these critics loudly invoke the values of rational debate and open discussion, they present the current debate over education not as a legitimate conflict in which reasonable disagreement is possible but as a simple choice between civilization and barbarism.

Yet because the mainstream media have reported misinformed opinions as if they were established facts, the picture the public has received of recent academic developments has come almost entirely from the most strident detractors of these developments. These inaccurate accounts, moreover, appear in forums that rarely invite the accused parties to present their side of the story. As Michael Berube has pointed out, "Recent literary theory is so rarely accorded the privilege of representing itself in nonacademic forums that journalists, disgruntled professors, embittered ex-graduate students and their families and friends now feel entitled to say anything at all about the academy without fear of contradiction by general readers. The field is wide open, and there's no penalty for charlatanry (quite the contrary), since few general readers are informed enough to spot even the grossest forms of misrepresentation and fraud."

There is blatant hypocrisy, furthermore, when the charge of politicizing the humanities comes from right-wing ideologues. Dinesh D'Souza, the author of the widely discussed and excerpted *Illiberal Education*, is a former domestic policy analyst of the Reagan administration, a research fellow at the conservative American Enterprise Institute and a founding editor of the notorious

Dartmouth Review, whose \$100,000 annual budget is heavily underwritten by the Olin Foundation. Current National Endowment for the Humanities Chair Lynne V. Cheney boasts of being a "conservative populist" even as she excoriates her critics for politicizing education.

These contradictions were seen in the recent debate over the nomination of Carol Iannone to the National Council on the Humanities. In the wake of Iannone's defeat, Cheney and others have now predictably blamed the outcome on the intolerant forces of "political correctness." But it is Cheney who has proved herself consistently intolerant of any view of scholarship that does not agree with her own. What has gone unnoticed in the commentary on the Iannone case is the growing ideological one-sidedness of the National Council. In disregard of the "comprehensive representation" of scholarly and professional views explicitly mandated by congressional legislation, the Council has been packed with such appointees as National Association of Scholars members Peter Shaw and Edwin J. Delattre and outspoken conservatives such as Donald Kagan. As Richard Cohen wrote in the *Washington Post*, "Had Iannone written brilliantly in defense of feminism.... Cheney would have looked elsewhere." Since the Council oversees NEH grant applications, purging it of a diversity of viewpoints makes it possible to deny grants to scholars who take the wrong political line in their work.

It is time for those who believe in the values of democratic education and reasoned dialogue to join together in an organization that can fight such powerful forms of intolerance and answer mischievous misrepresentations. We support the right of scholars and teachers to raise questions about the relations of culture, scholarship and education to politics—not in order to shut down debate on such issues but to open it. It is just such a debate that is prevented by discussion-stopping slogans like "political correctness."

What does the notion of a "democratic culture" mean and how does it relate to education? In our view, a democratic culture is one in which criteria of value in art are not permanently fixed by tradition and

authority but are subject to constant revision. It is a culture in which terms such as "canon," "literature," "tradition," "artistic value," "common culture" and even "truth" are seen as disputed rather than given. This means not that standards for judging art and scholarship must be discarded but that such standards should evolve out of democratic processes in which they can be thoughtfully challenged.

We understand the problems in any organization claiming to speak for a very diverse, heterogeneous group of teachers who may sharply disagree on many issues, including that of the politics of culture. What we envision is a coalition of very different individuals and groups, bound together by the belief that recent attacks on new forms of scholarship and teaching must be answered in a spirit of principled discussion. We think the very formation of such a group will be an important step in gaining influence over the public representations of us and our work.

It will also be a way to take responsibility for the task of clarifying our ideas and practices to the wider public—something, it must be admitted, that we have not done as well as we should. We need an organization that can not only refute malicious distortions but also educate the interested public about matters that still too often remain shrouded in mystery—new literary theories and movements such as deconstruction, feminism, multiculturalism and the new historicism, and their actual effects on classroom practice.

We therefore propose the formation of Teachers for a Democratic Culture, and we ask all who subscribe to this statement and would endorse its publication to send their name and address to Gerald Graff, English Department, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL 60637. If you wish to help pay the costs of mailing and publishing this statement, contributions of \$25 would be welcome.

To discuss plans for the organization, we also propose a meeting at this year's Modern Language Association convention, and at other professional meetings. A national conference on the issue may be held in the future. In the meantime, we welcome your suggestions concerning the principles, structure and goals of TDC.

Gerald Graff, University of Chicago
Gregory Jay, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee
David Shumway, Carnegie Mellon University
Houston Baker, University of Pennsylvania
Jane Gallop, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee
Jonathan Culler, Cornell University
Wayne Booth, University of Chicago
Lauren Berlant, University of Chicago
Don Bialostosky, University of Toledo
William Cain, Wellesley College
David William Cohen, Northwestern University
Cathy Davidson, Duke University
Margie Ferguson, University of Colorado
Nancy Fraser, Northwestern University
Stanley Fish, Duke University
Henry Louis Gates, Harvard University
Paul Lauter, Trinity College
Lawrence Lipking, Northwestern University
Wahneema Lubiano, Princeton University
Steven Mailloux, University of California at Irvine
Ellen Messer-Davidow, University of Minnesota
David Miller, University of Alabama
Mary Minock, Wayne State University
James Oakes, Northwestern University
Jeffrey Rice, Great Expectations Bookstore
Bruce Robbins, Rutgers University
David Simpson, University of Colorado
Harold Veaser, Wichita State University
Kenneth Warren, University of Chicago
Richard Yarbrough, UCLA

The Rhetoric of Reaction

By Albert O. Hirschman
Harvard University Press
208 pp., \$25

By Robert S. Boynton

FOR THOSE WHO BECAME POLITICALLY conscious during the Reagan years, the notion that conservative rhetoric can be differentiated into several distinct species might be hard to believe. After all, these were the years when trees created pollution, a Central American country the size of

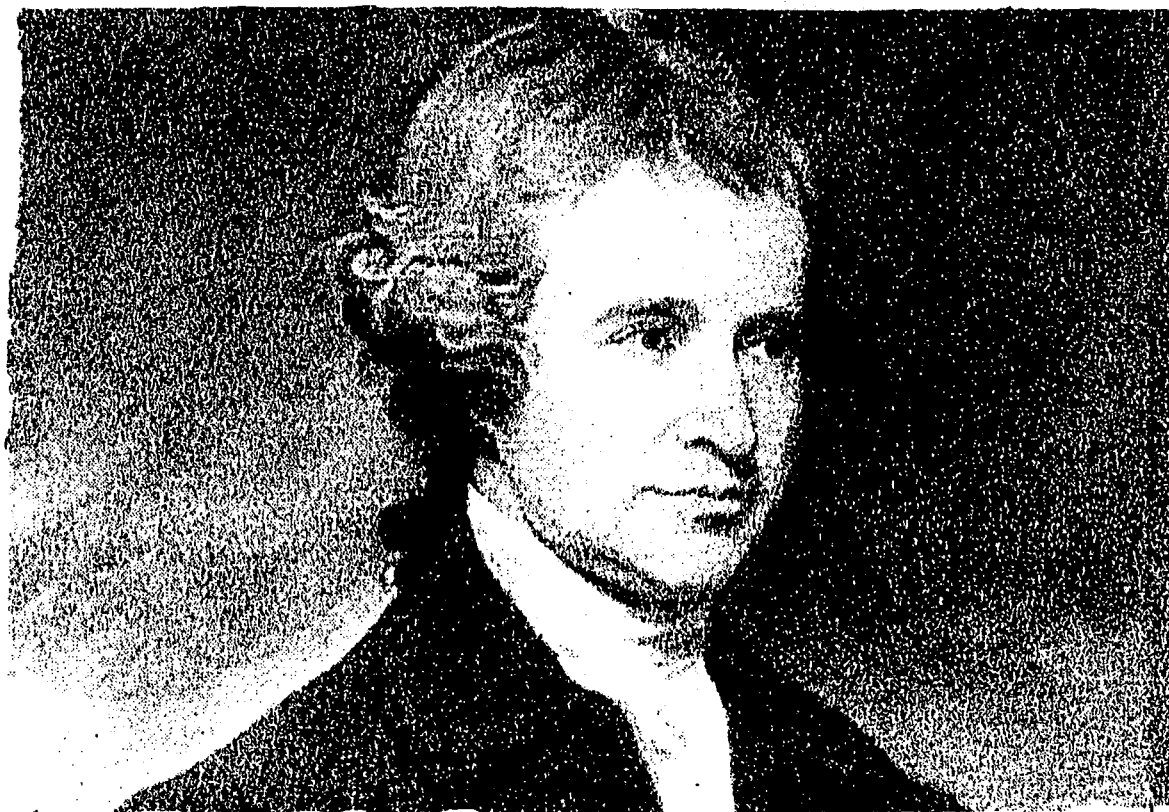
POLITICS

New Jersey threatened the American way of life, welfare payments caused poverty and the Soviet Union was an "evil empire"—right up to the day it became a cherished ally. Nor has George Bush done much to elevate the level of argumentation as he plies his ad hoc power politics under the name of "pragmatism."

As evidenced by seemingly intractable policy and culture wars, our already-impooverished political vocabulary has broken down, turning debates into little more than shouting matches. Pernicious, dishonest rhetoric is everywhere, as the possibility of intelligent communication between the left and right has simply disintegrated.

Partisan babble: Enter Albert O. Hirschman, an erudite, scholarly humanist who has distinguished himself in the social sciences by his ability to think historically about social issues. Hirschman, a professor emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study, resists the lure of fashionable liberal despair when faced with so much incoherent partisan babble and instead sets out to chart what he calls "the rhetoric of intransigence" with the tempered zeal of an etymologist on a mission.

The result is *The Rhetoric of Reaction*, a subtle, probing little book that is more likely to coax its readers with its erudition, scope and wit than devastate them with the finality of its



Portrait of Edmund Burke, French Revolution reactionary

Rhetoric of reactionaries need not confound the left

arguments. The book is not so much a guide to trumping reactionary rhetoric as an illuminating and pointed history lesson aimed at eroding the mythic power of some standard conservative canards.

Something of a performative text, *The Rhetoric of Reaction* enacts the core of Hirschman's prescriptive thesis: that progressives must become smarter about the age-old rhetoric that reactionaries repeatedly use to critique them so as to construct better, less rigid arguments. Hirschman's faith in the open-ended power of hope is the book's leitmotif (*A Bias for Hope* is the title of one of his collections of essays on development in Latin America), and is a faith he believes most of humanity shares once obfuscatory rhetoric is unmasked.

The Rhetoric of Reaction focuses on the language of politics because Hirschman is convinced that "discourse is shaped not so much by fundamental personality traits but simply by the imperatives of argu-

"In the effective use of the potent weapon of irony, conservatives have had a clear edge," Hirschman writes.

ment, almost regardless of the desires, character or convictions of the participants." Progressives are as bound by these strictures as reac-

tionaries, and the last part of the book shows how the arguments of the former too often merely mirror those of the latter.

Triumvirate of fear: Reactionary rhetoric falls into three basic categories: the argument from "perversity," that any action intended to improve a situation will only serve to exacerbate it (everything backfires); the argument from "futility," any attempt to improve society will simply fail to make a dent (the law of no motion); and the argument from "jeopardy," that the cost of change is too high because it endangers some previous accomplishment (one step forward, two steps back).

Armed with this schema, Hirschman shows how each argument has been deployed against three major progressive themes in history: equality before the law; universal suffrage; and the welfare state. Debate over these causes is the very stuff of liberal democratic theory since the French Revolution and Hirschman proves an expert guide in navigating through a wide selection of reactionary thinkers from Edmund Burke, Friedrich Hayek, Gustave Le Bon and Joseph de Maistre, to Gaetano Mosca, Charles Murray and Vilfredo Pareto. Lest the reader fear being overwhelmed by this sweeping account Hirschman (ever the social scientist) provides a table correlating reactionary thesis to epoch and thinker.

So what is the cash value of this elegant study? If American political culture is currently characterized by any sentiment, it is cynicism. The right casts a cynical eye on the re-

mains of progressive social policy, and the left is cynical about the possibility of fundamental change in such a conservative culture. But cynicism, like the skeptical, ironic language it uses, is not a political or philosophical position but merely a rhetorical stance. As specious as this rhetoric may be, if progressives are going to be politically successful (rather than just morally superior), this is the rhetoric they must come to terms with.

Teasing out the truth: What Hirschman's book does so brilliantly is explain how subtly different strands of reactionary rhetoric correspond to different philosophical and theological roots. When he draws these fine distinctions—"the perverse effect sees the social world as something volatile ... and futility advocates view the world as highly structured and as evolving according to immanent laws, which human actors are laughably impotent to modify"—the potential for intelligent disagreement seems possible.

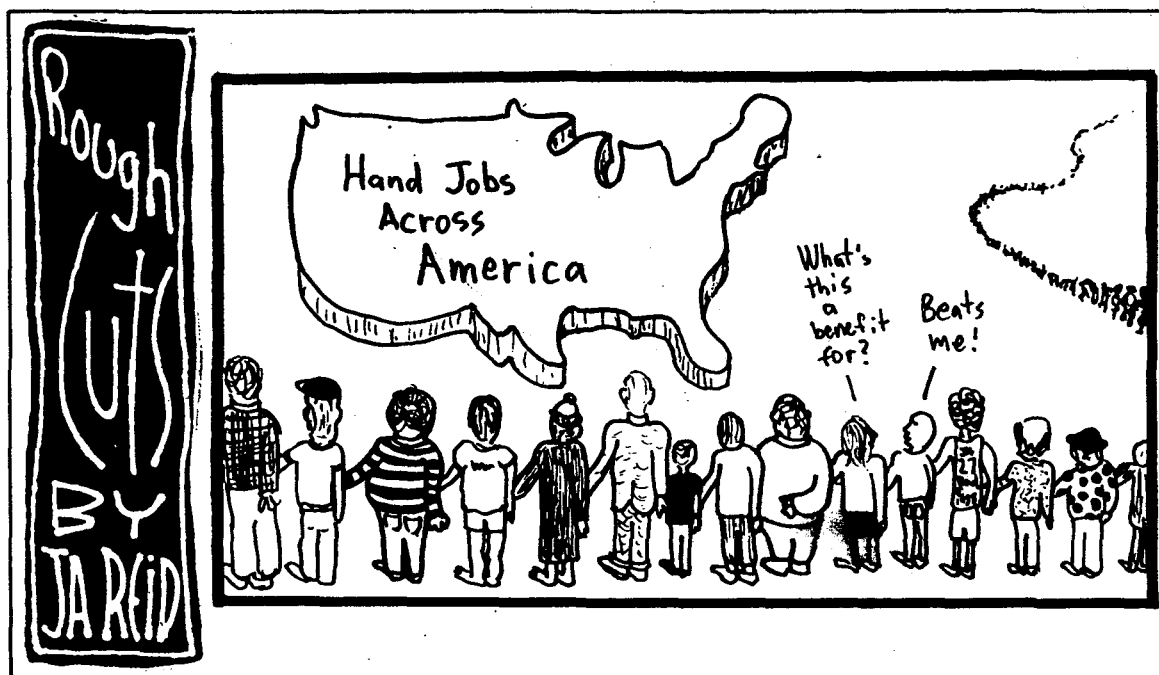
If conservative rhetoric succeeds by characterizing disagreements in simplistic terms, progressives must resist the temptation to respond in kind. Hirschman is expert at teasing out the differences that make a difference and in so doing deepens our understanding of what he calls "the otherness of the other."

On a more contemporary level, *The Rhetoric of Reaction* combs through history to illustrate how conservatives have always donned the cloak of progressive good will to argue against progressive policy in the name of protecting past gains and entrenched interests. This has special resonance at a time when politicians oppose civil rights legislation in the name of civil rights and get away with it.

The left has never lacked good ideas for improving society, and most progressive causes—from the basic social programs of the welfare state to voting rights that owe their existence to the civil rights movement—have eventually been accepted by the mainstream, if not coopted by the right. What progressives do often lack is grace and flexibility in forwarding their positions.

As Hirschman puts it, "There has been a certain lack of balance in the recurring debate between progressives and conservatives: in the effective use of the potent weapon of irony, conservatives have had a clear edge. ... In contrast, progressives have remained mired in earnestness. Most of them have been long on moral indignation and short on irony." With this book, perhaps progressives will be better able to anticipate the inevitable reactionary critique and learn to fight for the liberal principles most people believe, while using the language they are more likely to hear.

Robert S. Boynton is a writer living in New York.



Detering Democracy

By Noam Chomsky
Verso Books, 421 pp., \$29.95

By Michael Rosenfeld

NOAM CHOMSKY IS ONE OF THE most prolific and important social critics of our time. Over the past 25 years, through countless articles and speeches and books, he has been carving out a role for himself as the often marginalized but never silenced conscience of our country. In this role, Chomsky is relentless. He

CRITICISM

makes no concessions to the good intentions of our policymakers, or to the honest people who may work in the State Department, or the liberals who work for minor changes on foreign-policy issues. Chomsky demands a full moral accounting, and this makes his writing, which has been remarkably consistent in style and analysis over the years, acerbic and stark in content.

The ideas that Chomsky propounds are difficult to explain or critique in the short space of a book review. The job is even more difficult because his new book, *Detering Democracy*, is the least well organized book of his that I have read (I can't say I've read them all). *Detering Democracy* is made up mostly of essays taken from *Z Magazine* over the past two years. Because the book's chapters were essays scattered over many months and many issues, there is a problem of development. The book is too much of a topical and dismissive analysis of the U.S. government hypocrisies without enough of Chomsky's usual probing into the nuances of why we as a nation tend to believe things that we are told even when we ought to know better.

In fairness to Chomsky, social criticism and political dissidence are his second calling. By profession he is a linguist. And Chomsky has never been one to hide himself in the ivory tower to work on his books; he has always been active—giving speeches, organizing people, getting his hands dirty in the work of politics. As a result of the many time constraints, and his desire to publish with a demonic regularity, his recent books have all been compilations. *On Power and Ideology* (1987), a short but biting treatise, was based on the transcripts of a series of lectures he gave at the University of Central America in Managua. *Necessary Illusions* (1989) was based on lectures he gave over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio network. Lecture texts have the advantage of originally being conceived and delivered as a unit, whereas the essays in Chomsky's more recent books are often haphazard.

Detering Democracy is no exception. Among the subjects that Chomsky vents withering scorn upon in *Detering Democracy* are the Cold War. According to Chomsky, the Cold War, as it was commonly understood, was being



Chomsky examines ways of *Detering Democracy*

some kind of struggle for power between the U.S. and the USSR) was a hoax. Thus, the Cold War was an excuse (and often a ridiculously flimsy one) that the leaders of each superpower used to justify vast military expenditures and foreign interventions. The Cold War myth, in Chomsky's view, was eminently useful for the ruling elites in both countries, because it gave them a panic button to press whenever a new weapons system or an exotic intervention was wanted. The Cold War was such an excellent ruse that the threat of peace was quite alarming to U.S. planners who have, at various times during the Cold War, rebuffed the idea of normalizing relations with the Soviets.

Chomsky's criticism, of course, suggests that the Cold War was a hoax. But he also admits that the military-industrial complex and the military machine itself have tended to perpetuate the Cold War myth, and Chomsky brings a careful reading of the official U.S. planning

documents, which illuminate the thought process behind the Cold War. NSC 68 is one of the most famous of post-war U.S. planning documents. In it, Paul Nitze laid out the hawkish viewpoint that the U.S. needed a vastly increased military budget and a worldwide military role. The Soviets, Nitze admitted, were hopelessly behind in technology and economy and saddled with long land borders to defend. The Soviets were far too weak to pose a threat to our security, but that did not deter Nitze, because the Russians "can do more with less," and were therefore a mortal threat.

A generation of scholars and students have studied the Cold War and NSC 68 and the "rollback" theory (adopted to "containment") the government's twin sister. Although there have been some notable exceptions, the general planning documents of the U.S. for military and other purposes have not been widely read. Chomsky reads

state documents with great care. Perhaps it is his training as a linguist that enables him to isolate the central inconsistencies and contradictions where others are able to see only respectable statecraft.

How Chomsky analyzes a concept like the Cold War may have more in common with modern literary analysis than politics per se. Chomsky deconstructs the "Cold War." He reads National Security Council documents the way an English scholar reads a T.S. Eliot poem: what does each line assume? What are the underlying presumptions? What do the various presumptions conspire to mean? And, especially: what assumptions does the author expect the reader to bring to the text? Are

Chomsky reads documents the way an English scholar reads a T.S. Eliot poem.

those assumptions valid? After meaning has been teased out of the text, Chomsky has a distinct advantage over the literary critics, because documents such as NSC 68 claim to be not literary inventions but realistic appraisals of actual situations. And, after all, this is exactly the distinction that Chomsky questions.

Self-censorship: When Chomsky is able to disrobe the emperor by debunking the common wisdom, he leads the reader to the next question, the one of greatest interest: how, in a free society, can the emperor parade down Pennsylvania Avenue naked and not be charged with indecent exposure? In societies where censorship and state police intervention are the norm, we expect that people will be reticent about expressing critical or contrary opinions. In the U.S., we have no such excuses. Of course, it's too simple to say there is no critical debate of policy issues in the mainstream of the United States. There's plenty of debate. The debate rages over questions of tactics, such as whether the Contras were effective or counterproductive in ousting the Sandinistas. All sides in the debate must presume the worthiness of ousting the Sandinistas and, therefore, the benevolent goals of U.S. policy.

When the World Court (the judicial arm of the United Nations) charged the U.S. with conducting a terrorist campaign against Nicaragua that resulted in damages of \$14 billion, there were literally no words to describe the event. That the legal representatives of the world community could find the United States to be supporting terrorism was impossible to understand, because it ran contrary to every assumption that had always been voiced in the mainstream of our society. And so, making no sense, the World Court decision was quickly forgotten. As Chomsky reveals, there are indeed censors in our society, but they reside within us: they are the part of us that keeps us from saying something outrageous and unreasonable (even if we know it to be true).

...*"The U.S. is a leading terrorist state," or "Washington is blocking the peace process" or "Maybe we should tell the truth about Cambodia and Timor" or other departures from dogma ... lack cognitive meaning. They are imprecations, like shouting "Fuck You" in public: they can elicit only a stream of abuse, not a rational response. We see here the ultimate achievement of thought control, well beyond what Orwell imagined. Large parts of the language are simply determined to be devoid of meaning.*

This nugget of pure Chomskyan insight is tucked away on page 317, under the heading "Rallying to Chomsky." It's the kind of organization that makes *Detering Democracy* somewhat daunting reading, even though the brilliance of the man and the righteousness of his cause make the effort worth while. Chomsky is a writer living in Chicago.

IN THESE PAGES OCT. 9-15, 1991 19

Stairway to Hell: The 500 Best Heavy Metal Albums in the Universe

By Chuck Eddy
Harmony Books, 232 pp., \$14

By John Dougan

DISMISSED AS LOUD, STUPID, misogynistic, testosterone-fueled doofus rebellion, heavy metal has become the most openly hated and, almost in spite of itself, one of the best-selling rock genres. Perversely rarefied as the distillation of all that is wrong with rock'n'roll and humanity at large, metal has endured and, ultimately, profited from the piously moral far right's assertion of a Satan-inspired marketing ploy to hurry along Armageddon, as well as the wrath of smug, dogmatic lefties pissed by its confrontational nature, distaste for ideology and generally anti-social behavior.

The best efforts of do-gooders and do-badders notwithstanding, metal continues to find new support in the unlikely places (like Metallica profiled in *Mother Jones*, for instance). Constantly reconfigured and re-marketed, and because of its history as the prime outlet of emotional and aesthetic release for its predominantly white, male, teenage, disenfranchised, non-professional, working-class audience, metal (like rap) is as good as anti-authoritarian youth culture empowerment gets. For those who have squat, it offers promise of the best of both worlds: one that triumphs the rights of the individual (like the MC5 said: "Let me be who I am, and let me kick out the jams") and a mock-revolution whose rhetoric is equal parts "kick over statues" and "let's get laid."

Chasin' the jargonauts: In *Stairway to Hell: The 500 Best Heavy Metal Albums in the Universe*, heavy metal's most perceptive, literate and idiosyncratic critic, Chuck Eddy, has taken it upon himself to completely turn the genre ass-backwards into a multicultural not-for-boys-only metallic utopia incorporating disparate genres (jazz, funk, R&B, dreaded disco) that at times exhibit heavy metal characteristics, or, more specifically, metal's attitude. In his words, "All (decent) loud-guitar squashing-ears-like-bugs brain damage that could conceivably (theoretically) appeal to a heavy metal audience, not just observers-of-arbitrary-dress-code already accepted by said crowd," could make the cut. And though that will undoubtedly infuriate doctrinaire headbangers, it'll please the hell out of anyone who believes that soul funk performers like Teena Marie and the Jimmy Castor Bunch made records that deserve to be (hell, belong) in Eddy's Top 10.

Yet, for all his perspicacity and exhaustive research, Eddy's tome sometimes avoids harder issues. Steadfastly refusing to be intimidated by either rightist or leftist dogma about metal's noxious excesses, he glibly sidesteps the debate.



Rockin' at the headbangers' ball

noting that repulsive ideas have been the province of rock since Leadbelly; that to be offended comes from inflated expectations that the genre neither wants nor asks for.

As rationalizations go, it's a good one, but it also offers a huge loophole that obviates making more exacting demands on the music. He's right, it does help to approach this stuff with a sense of humor, but ultimately that too means cutting talented assholes like Axl Rose more slack (and Eddy, defending him the way liberal critics defend Public Enemy, cuts him plenty) than he should.

Metal rainbow: But Eddy's no chump. He's smart enough (and liberal enough, although it'd kill him to admit it) to know that dehumanization and dumbness, especially when it's manifested in a stupidly conceived elitism or as a grotesque marketing tool, is worthless. And he, for the large part, avoids bands that fit that description. What's left is mostly good, although 500 worthwhile albums is a bit of a stretch. But, since metal has mutated from loud blues-based fuzz bashing to slower than tar riff muck as well as thrash and speedcore, 500 provides enough room to be very specific about sub-genres. Perhaps too specific for its own good.

For all his quirky picks—the aforementioned Teena Marie and Jimmy Castor, the Osmonds (yup, *Crazy Horses* No. 66), Bo Donaldson and the Heywoods—Eddy builds his foundation on the unsurprising. I'm sure no one will be shocked to find *Led Zeppelin 4* (a.k.a. *Zoso*, the one

with "Stairway to Heaven") at No. 1, or that his Top 10 includes Alice Cooper, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Aerosmith and Guns N'Roses. As he sees it (and he's right), these records are seminal distillations of the genre. They're also representative of metal's perverse heterogeneity: theatrical androgyny (Cooper), working-class angst (Skynyrd), sweeping grandeur (Zep) or renegade wantonness (GN'R). Whatever, they all speak with a clarity and directness that doesn't succumb to pretense or bullshit, even when they want or try to.

But with 490 records to go, the sheer weight of the project takes a heavy critical toll. Eddy seems to run out of steam two-thirds of the way through the book. So much so that he lazily offers up haphazard, weak defenses. He calls Jane's Addiction's *Ritual de lo Habitual* "Garden-variety semi-U2 pop grunge for the most part, especially on side two." Sounds to me like this record's overrated even at No. 365. Similarly, the book's padded with too much worthlessness in the form of arcane post-hippie crud rockers (Budgie, Bull Angus, Ursa Major, Black Oak Arkansas), crummy neo-glam bubblemetal (Poison, Britny Fox), teen dream blowhards (Bon Jovi) and a screwy, completely overstated appreciation for veteran good-time boys Kix (their debut LP sits, amazingly, at No. 5). **Running on attitude:** To his credit, though, Eddy's diligent scholarship and unrestrained free thinking has unearthed a truckload of great records. Some are standard metal fare possessing brawns and brains

(Motorhead, Pink Fairies, Metallica, Voi Vod), others are truly daring and not genre-specific. Loud noise jazz guitar genius Sonny Sharrock makes the list as band member (with Last Exit) and solo performer seven times. That's two times more than Aerosmith.

Funk rock's greatest aggregation Funkadelic gets six mentions. Great lost punk albums by the Adverts and

MUSIC

the Vibrators are rediscovered. Cro-magnons like the Antiseen, art-punks like the Swans and Flesh-eaters, hateful little twerps like the Pagans all find deserved space here, proving that there may well be a metal utopia.

In true rock critic fashion, Eddy's personality and attitude propels *Stairway* into semantic hyperdrive with its all-out berserkness. Proudly idiosyncratic, his rigorously detailed prose and rugged individualism are always on display, as if he's constantly daring readers to call his

Dismissed as stupid, loud, misogynistic, testosterone-fueled rebellion, heavy metal has become, almost in spite of itself, one of rock's best-selling genres.

bluff. A pure product of '70s popular culture, Eddy's writing is only casually respectful of tradition as it careens wildly from dazzlingly succinct to mega-hyphenated slangpeak. When his creative faculties become totally unglued, his writing becomes so thick it's gelatinous, seemingly unedited ruminations that are showy and hollow. As a result, Lul's *Little Oral Annie* succeeds in "demystifying the demystifiers by uncynically transforming short-attention-span microminimalism freed from clinical conceptualization into hard-ax structural advancement freed from hate-thy-neighbor dehumanization." Really?

For better and worse, *Stairway* wouldn't be worth the trees cut to print it if it weren't for the sheer force of Eddy's Weltanschauung (the German word for comprehensive world view; Eddy likes to use it). I believe there isn't another critic alive qualified to take on this task, or daring enough to tear the genre limb from limb and put it back together only to repeatedly kick its ass.

But just who was this book written for? Surely not the average headbanger, who'll toss it away after reading the Teena Marie entry. Other rock critics? Well, they'd understand his intent and all the neat little puns and wordplays, but that's not what I'd call a prime best-selling audience. Whatever it was he set out to do, Eddy could well have written the greatest, most useless critical guide ever. Only time will tell.

John Dougan is a writer living in Minneapolis.

By Josh Neufeld

ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE 1980S, there was a slight, sorta geeky guy who periodically popped up on TV—*Saturday Night Live*, *Good Morning America*, the odd special. He was innocuous enough, except for being saddled with the same moniker as one of the most abominable presi-

TELEVISION

dents in our time. Ronald Prescott Reagan was unlike other presidential progeny, however, contending—as much as permissible in those dark days—that he was of a different political stripe altogether. And now, two and a half years after his dad meandered off into the sunset, he's attempting to prove it with *The Ron Reagan Show*. Better late than never, I suppose.

Ron Reagan airs 11:30 each week-night in most places, tackling vogue concerns in a free-form style that melds *Nightline* with *Donahue*. If you're the sort who only watches the tube for old movies, opera and PBS specials, *The Ron Reagan Show* won't do a thing for you. But if you find circumstance and end-of-the-day fatigue make you a late-night couch potato, odds are you'll find it a welcome alternative to the supreme banality of *Carson* and the arm-spinning woolfing repetitiveness of *Arsenio*.

According to his publicist, Reagan's a good Hollywood lefty: he reads *The Atlantic*, *Harper's* and *The Progressive*, and he sees himself as a classic big-government liberal—just like his father before the big conversion. Unlike his dad, Reagan is obviously literate, reasonably articulate and politically tuned-in. Reagan pluckily pledges to buck convention and, among other things, throw a "Watergate reunion" and even address "the Gulf War: Who won, what we won and why we were lied to all along. Hopefully, they'll let us do that before they throw us off the air." (*Los Angeles Times*). In addition, the month-old show aspires to discuss homophobia, date rape, interracial relationships, athletes and advertising, women and the beauty myth, the politics of hate and an endless plethora of themes that make popular fodder for magazines like this one.

Feeding off the host: Reagan respects his audience and insists that television needn't be mind-numbing. Consequently, *The Ron Reagan Show* bills itself as an alternative, and is willing to nip the hand that feeds it, i.e., TV and its advertisers. And, as a Fox network show, it does push the envelope, such as it is, a bit. Mostly, however, the show's trademark has been its inconsistency. Reagan decries intrusive advertising, cowardly programming and television's insistent focus on the banal, but he ignores larger institutional forces such as Reagan-era deregula-



Bornie Schiffman

Can U.S. learn to love another Ron Reagan?

tion, industry self-censorship and corporate advertising clout, factors so intrinsically responsible for what we see on the tube.

Like every show of its ilk, from *Nightline* to *Geraldo* to *Oprah*, *Ron Reagan* spins on the personality of its host. Unfortunately, the turtlish Reagan is not a dynamic presence, but he makes up for what he lacks in charisma with a spirited approach to his role as facilitator. He injects his opinions into discussions, enlivening them with acerbic rejoinders as well as informed responses and questions.

Part of the show's schtick is Reagan's affinity with his audience. He is, after all, just a regular, sarcastic guy who happens to be the son of an ex-president. Each program opens with Reagan up in the seats, confronting two guests. After a commercial interruption, more panelists appear on stage and Reagan moves down to harangue them from downstage. (Only rarely does he sit with the panelists, mostly on episodes—such as the amazingly myopic and reactionary appraisal of the MIA situation—where his sympathies clearly lie with all the guests.) The latter part of each episode features questions from the spectators, who are usually picked specifically for each program. Even so, they tend to be classic talk-show attendees, brimming with civilized bourgeois values. They can be counted on at every opportunity to burble things like, "America was founded on the principle of giving people a second chance."

Interview interruptus: The show's structure and television's

overwhelming visual potency limit analysis: incessant multiple-camera editing, constant commercial breaks and Reagan's need to fit the formula into its hour time limit invariably prevent debates from scratching beneath the surface. Moreover, Reagan habitually interrupts discussions just as they are deepening to ask related but tangential questions that enable him to "cover the bases" but limit substantive debate.

Yet occasionally the show manages to surmount the medium and tackle relevant concerns in a serious manner. The question, however, is what we're supposed to garner from such fare: defending the show's political or educational value is a tenuous bet, especially when, for example, the debate on homelessness is followed by two consecutive episodes devoted to pondering the existence of space aliens. Indeed, as the weeks pass, *Ron Reagan's* well may be running dry. Topics have leaned increasingly toward the insipid and sensationalistic. The program on gambling, for instance, ignored the institutionalized opiate of the state lottery, while the homelessness debate was "balanced" by, among others, hate-show demagogue Rush Limbaugh.

For whom, exactly, is *The Ron Reagan Show* aiming? Though Fox and MCA—who are co-syndicating the show—run it in most markets in competition with late-night kings Carson and Hall, other locales broadcast it throughout the day. The producers covet the 18-to-49-year-old viewership, but, it seems, to little effect. According to Jack Fentress of Petry National Television, *Ron Rea-*

gan draws only a third of Arsenio's audience and a fourth of Carson's. *The Ron Reagan Show's* not right for the kooky MTV set: it attempts to meld analysis with "good television" but has trouble playing both sides of the fence. The non-serious episodes just aren't punchy or entertaining enough—Reagan won't stoop all the way and is often too impatient with those with whom he doesn't agree. Neither does the show welcome a cult following attracted to quirkiness. This show, though different, is not quirky. *The Ron Reagan Show* is groping for an identity, and without staking a more forceful political position, establishing itself with its target audience of aware yuppies—assuming such creatures exist—will be difficult.

These factors undoubtedly prompted the recent decision to put *The Ron Reagan Show* on hiatus, which is TV doublespeak for imminent demise. This is a sad fate for a show that does what it can to challenge convention. The test now is whether the show's fans—whom-ever they may be—garner enough momentum to convince the powers that be to give it another go. *Ron Reagan* is guaranteed 65 episodes and eight weeks of reruns, so there is time. The question is whether it's worth it.

The show has displayed possibility. The first-week installment on homosexuality, outing and AIDS, for instance, featured an all-gay and lesbian (though all-white) panel, as well as an audience saturated with members of ACT-UP and Queer Nation. Reagan wasn't interested in displaying a collection of deviants and freaks but instead a group of people whose sexuality was a given. Small victory, indeed, but significant when commercial TV otherwise exhibits homosexuality as taboo, titillation or framed as some sort of moral question.

Conflicting sympathies: The more weighty episodes display Reagan's willingness to invest his surprisingly insightful opinions and political viewpoints into the dialogue. Unlike his dad, however, Ron is no teflon host and petulantly snaps at those who cross him. Though this is understandable, the way television renders conflict makes these outbursts seem shrill and his attacker more sympathetic.

On the other hand, this principle worked in Reagan's favor during that unforgettable episode on gay issues when, almost as one, the audience

assaulted Reagan's father's handling (or lack thereof) of the AIDS crisis. Trapped in the small sound stage with a vocal crowd well-accustomed to TV's spotlight, Reagan sputtered helplessly before their onslaught. Notwithstanding ACT-UP's television acumen and ability to sloganize, however, their quarrel really lay with the elder Reagan. Understandably, but unreasonably, they expected the son to answer for the crimes of his father. In the end, their assault only made the beleaguered Ron appear sympathetic. That same show featured ex-*Outweek* editor Michelangelo Signorile's attempt to "out" Reagan (who has been rumored to be homosexual since his ballet days) as well as Reagan's wife of 11 years. Reagan squirmed awkwardly under the questioning, especially when his pat answers ran out.

But there is one topic that *The Ron Reagan Show* will never cover: Reagan the president. The Gipper looms over the show like some ominous phantom, omnipresent because of who little Ron is, yet unnameable, referred to only as "your father." Somehow, even in the episodes devoted to AIDS and homelessness, Reagan's presidency managed to avoid falling under the microscope. Infuriatingly—and here is where everything the show supposedly represents is only so much hot air—Reagan circumvents his father every time. What Ron knows is undoubtedly enough fodder for a hundred episodes: just hearing about his dad's involvement in the October Surprise or the Iran-contra affairs would be enough.

Ironically, Reagan's inability—by circumstance and choice—to tackle both his dad's administration and television's power structure points to the pair's inherent partnership—the Gipper was the ultimate image official, constructed by TV so much that he apotheosised into some sort of real-life Max Headroom, inherently propped up and bogus and full of the same easy entertainment value as *Dynasty* or *The Cosby Show*. Dad, in other words, made much better TV than his 33-year-old namesake.

It could have been a fairy tale: closet lefty Ron gets his shot by virtue of his dad's name and singlehandedly shifts the discourse to the left. Not this time—Reagan has too much entrenchment against him, and he doesn't have such grandiose visions anyway. The hoped-for Oedipal battle seems forever postponed, and without it, *Ron Reagan* won't ever do more than titillate. The show's promise flickers and seems to dim, and may soon be no more interesting than its look-alikes. We can bless our stars that we're free of Morton Downey, but don't expect to see *Ron Reagan's* wishy-washy liberalism catch on fast.

Josh Neufeld is a freelance writer and illustrator based at *The Nation* in New York.

The Baltics

Continued from page 11

Popular Front, favors a general open-door policy along those lines.

More hardline voices in Estonia reckon that citizenship should be decided on patriotic lines. Jüri Estam of the Estonian National Independence Party and columnist for the weekly paper *Estonian Life* attacks the liberal approach of the Popular Front and the Social Democrats as offering citizenship to people—Russians—"without any regard for their political allegiances and loyalties."

Nationalism and patriotism, though dubious sentiments for many Westerners, clearly have wider connotations in the Baltic States, denoting general backing for independence and the reassertion of cultural identity. Under Soviet rule, these attitudes were suppressed as fascistic, as bourgeois plots, though it is now apparent that they were supported by all classes. Extremism exists in various forms, but it is generally on the sidelines of popular political currents. Nevertheless, much remains unresolved and the situation of the Russian population, most of which is intent on staying in the Baltics, is precarious.

At the same time, the nationalist urge to do away with everything Soviet tends to obscure another black area of Baltic history, the Nazi occupation of 1941-44.

Over 5,000 Estonians were executed in concentration camps. In Latvia, local involvement in the German SS led to numerous mass killings and other war crimes. Lithuanian Jews were the worst to suffer: over 200,000 of them were systematically exterminated during the course of the war. Collab-

oration with the Nazis was widespread, and so was resistance, but balanced assessment of this period is missing in the new de-Sovietized historical accounts one comes across in the Baltic States. In granting indiscriminate amnesty to people prosecuted and persecuted under Soviet rule, Lithuania's new rulers have also forgiven many Nazi war

criminals, a move that is perceived as anti-Semitic and one that will alienate the Jewish minority.

Champagne corks popped and people parted when the Soviet Union finally approved Baltic independence on September 6. Two days later, a few thousand people congregated once again in Tallinn's Song Festival

Arena, where they sang of freedom and independence, while the rain poured relentlessly. But on both occasions, the mood was muted, half-hearted. "People are tired," said Saharov as he watched the crowd. "They need more than songs."

Mark Waller is a British journalist living in Finland.

C A L E N D A R

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NEW YORK

October 10-24

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL

Thursday, Oct. 10—Stanley Aronowitz, *The Political Significance of Class in the United States* (lecture, postponed from Oct. 8), 8 p.m.; \$6.

Sunday, Oct. 13—Bruce Kayton, *Radical Walking Tour of the Lower East Side* (meets at the cube at Astor Place) 1 p.m.; \$6.

Diasporic Development (poetry discussion), 2 p.m.; \$5.

Thursday, Oct. 17—Terry Eagleton, *Marxism, Aesthetics and Morality* (lecture), 8 p.m.; \$8.

Friday, Oct. 18—Terry Eagleton, *Marxism, Aesthetics and Morality* (3-day intensive seminar), 6-9:30 p.m.; \$195 (includes previous evening's lecture).

Saturday, Oct. 19—Terry Eagleton, continuation of seminar on *Marxism, Aesthetics and Morality*, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sunday—Oct. 20—Terry Eagleton, continuation of seminar on *Marxism, Aesthetics and Morality*, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Charles Wood and Dary John Mizelle (concert), 5 p.m.; \$5.

Monday, Oct. 21—Moishe Brier, *Why I Went to Spain in 1936* (lecture), 7 p.m.; \$6.

Wednesday, Oct. 23—Andrew Ross and Michele Wallace, *The Debate over "Political Correctness"* (panel discussion), 8 p.m.; \$6.

Thursday, Oct. 24—Bertell Ollman, *Communism: Ours, Not Theirs* (first of 4 classes), 8 p.m.; \$50.

Upcoming Intensive Seminars: Nov. 14-17, Boris Kagarlitsky, *Perestroika, Society and the Limits to Capitalization in the Soviet Union*; Dec. 2-4, Luciana Castellina, *European Parliament member and leader of left wing of the Italian Communist Party, 1992 and Left Politics in Europe*.

Unless specified, all events take place at The New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St. (5 blocks below Canal St. between Church St. and Broadway), New York, NY 10013. Scholarships are available for low-income people. For more information, call (212) 941-0332.

October 17

The Campaign for Peace and Democracy will host a forum on "Environmental Activism in Post-Communist Czechoslovakia." Speakers will include Juraj Zamkovsky and Helena Forrova, members of the Slovak Union of Nature and Landscape Conservation, and David Hunter, attorney with the Center for International Environmental Law in Washington, D.C., and former environmental consultant in Czechoslovakia. Admission free, 6:45 p.m., Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, 15 Union Square West, 6th Floor. For details, contact: CPD, P.O. Box 1640, Cathedral Station, New York, NY 10025. Tel: (212) 666-5924.

CHICAGO

October 19

The Illinois Labor Network Against Apartheid sponsors "Labor and South Africa, Update on the Struggle Against Apartheid," with special guests Thami Skenjana and Khumbu Mtinjane, members of the National Education, Health & Allied Workers Union. Speakers include Rep. Charles Hayes, UAW International Affairs Director Don Stillman, Professor Lisa

Brock and Prexy Nesbitt. Registration: 9:00 a.m.; Program: 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., ACTWU, 333 S. Ashland. For more information, call (312) 583-6661.

DALLAS

November 14-16

WHO KILLED JFK? Authors, experts, eyewitnesses explore unanswered questions. Featured speakers include Jim Marrs, Robert Groden, John Davis, Dr. Cyril E. Wecht, Jim Moore and J. Gary Shaw. Nov. 14-16, Hyatt Regency, Dallas. A.S.K. For more information and brochure, call (512) 445-8390.

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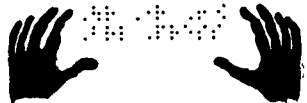
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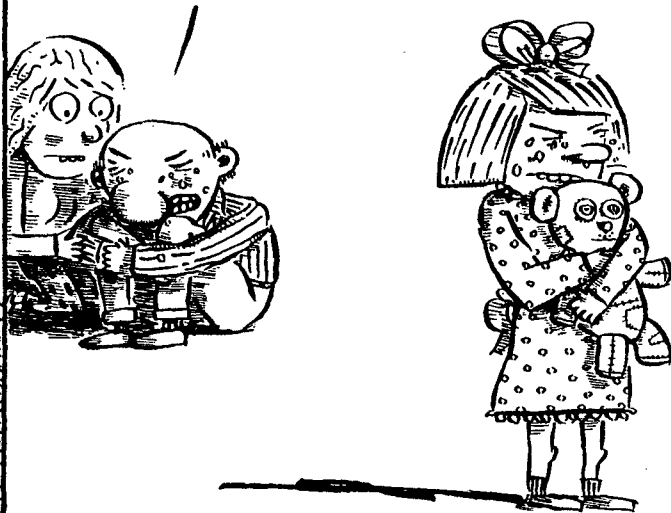
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The information underclass

By not-so-benign indifference, America has been cultivating its own, homegrown, Third World nation.

By Travis Charbeneau

IF YOU'RE READING THIS, YOU'RE AN ELITIST. THE mere fact that you can and do read puts you among the "haves" vs. the "have nots," among the information rich vs. the information poor. This is a distinction that counts as we increasingly encounter the information era. America's "information underclass," most visibly the poor and minorities, is rapidly eroding into a "super-lumpenproletariat" as this new era picks up steam.

By not-so-benign indifference, America has been cultivating its own, homegrown Third World nation, one that there will never be enough police or jail space to contain. Carrying this information-poor nation within a nation into the future will be a fantastic community burden, a burden too many competing communities will not carry. The Japanese and West Europeans obviously will not. Significantly, neither will the now-troubled "neo-socialist" bloc, the Poles, the Hungarians, the Soviets—even the Cubans.

Shames, shams and flimflams:

Whatever shortcomings these nations have, lack of strong, universal K-12 education is not among them. Further, we can safely call them "neo-socialists" because, once the troublesome transitions are complete, these places are going to look a lot more like Sweden or Canada than the wild

and woolly U.S. They will maintain a vigorous social infrastructure to preserve such valuable items as health care and unemployment benefits. And they'll do it precisely to avoid the American example. In this unfortunate department, as in so many positive areas, the U.S. has been an excellent teacher: literacy can't be achieved in a social vacuum; sick, hungry children from disintegrating families don't learn.

Even such famous hell holes as China have a high literacy rate. The other industrialized nations are challenge enough. If we continue to fail our young people, many of today's "failed" communist societies will be wielding a broad, competitive edge that America can only combat with an increasingly narrow and burdened intelligentsia: you.

And, of course, your children. But, can your children read? Do they read? We are accustomed to thinking of "the underclass" in classic economic terms, but members of the "information underclass" may even now be parked in front of the TV downstairs. We've been wringing our hands for years: kids don't know where the Pacific Ocean is, they can't add without a calculator, they think *Moby Dick* might be the story of a discouraged genital organ.

Americans just cannot seem to make the psychological adjustment to the post-war period. In 1950, we ran the world. In 1991, we're running from it. Just count the number of times you find

"The only developed nation that lacks..." tacked in front of this or that vital social need, from national health care to parental leave. Our obsessive interests in macho military adventures and plastic surgery simply provide metaphors for the obvious: we're not aging gracefully, not maturely adapting to change.

Hawking hegemony: The reason literacy in reading and writing (and, yes, in video, too) looms so large is that America's most promising prospect in tomorrow's markets, America's most popular product, is "America." Our ideas about politics, art, entertainment, economics, high technology R&D—American culture generally—is something the world still wants to buy. Not just Coke and blue jeans, but Jefferson and Madison, Dick Tracy and Aerosmith—everything from computer software to trashy novels. Even as the once-almighty American manufactory corrodes into ochre or reopens "under new management," American "words" retain an original, highly-polished sheen.

But how long can this last, given our apparent willingness to "write off" our growing masses of illiterates at both the top and the bottom of society? Unless Americans continue to reinvent and manage the cultural machine everyone in the world is yearning to play with, some Korean cartel will eventually produce a successful knock-off and we'll be lining up to buy ourselves back piecemeal, on floppy disks, CDs and video cassettes.

Perhaps the Japanese are destined to build the world's VCRs. Perhaps multinationals such as General Motors are barely American companies at all. Maybe it doesn't matter who actually owns Paramount Studios. But, through what can be viewed only as a national policy of child abuse, Americans seem determined to destroy their own culture from within. Without literacy and all it requires in terms of supporting cultural resources, such a bleak future is guaranteed.

Despite recent spasms, real "war" has moved from geographic to economic battlefields. Still, the annals of military history do provide a telling anecdote on the devolution of literacy:

The Duke of Wellington, himself a member of the Irish "underclass," was, according to one biographer, a "dreamy, idle and shy lad" who left Eton with no sign of promise. At Waterloo in 1815, in the thick of battle and personally under fire, he dashed off the following dispatch: "I see that fire has communicated from the haystack to the roof of the chateau. You must however still keep your men in those parts to which the fire does not reach. Take care that no men are lost by the falling in of the roof, or floors. After they will have fallen in, occupy the ruined walls inside of the garden, particularly if it should be possible for the enemy to pass through the embers to the inside of the house."

This is writing at once elegant and concise. It is certainly not Pentagonese, obscured with acronyms and euphemisms such as "BDAs" and "collateral damage." When "dreamy, idle and shy" American schoolkids, let alone their elders, can write like that, our "competitiveness" problems, and many other woes, will be over.

Travis Charbeneau is a widely published writer living in Richmond, Va.

